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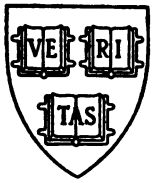
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The Colonial Parson

OF

New England

A Picture

BY

FRANK SAMUEL CHILD

Author of "An Old New England Town"

NEW YORK

THE BAKER & TAYLOR CO.

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TO

THE DESCENDANTS

OF

OUR COLONIAL PARSONS

THE NOBLE MEN AND WOMEN OF TO-DAY

WHO TRANSMIT THE SPIRIT AND

MAGNIFY THE POWER

PECULIAR TO

THEIR ILLUSTRIOUS ANCESTORS

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FORE-WORD.

THE author expresses his thanks to various writers who have contributed to the literature of this subject. He owes them a large debt.

Biographical sketches of the New England ministers are numerous. They appear in books like Mather's "Magnalia" and Sprague's "Annals of the American Pulpit," or in separate works like the "Life of Brainerd" and the "Life of Edwards." Col. T. W. Higginson, Mrs. Alice Morse Earle, Mr. William Root Bliss (three individuals to whom the author is under special obligations) have written delightful chapters upon the parson.

The task of gleaning from original sources, as well as from the later writings,

has been an agreeable one. Many of the incidents woven into this characterization of the parson are necessarily familiar to readers of our history. But when these illustrations seem hackneyed, it must be borne in mind that they are used because they are believed to throw light upon the subject, irrespective of their freshness or currency.

A great many names and anecdotes that might profitably have been wrought into the picture will occur to the reader. Their omission may be explained by the fact that the author has sought to make his statement of the case as brief and compact as the circumstances permitted.

THE COLONIAL PARSON OF NEW ENGLAND

PARSONS AND PARSONS.

It is Mr. Barrie, writing "The Little Minister," who says: "In these days the first question asked of a child was not, 'Tell me your name,' but 'What are you to be?' And one child in every family replied, 'A minister.'" While the parson has generally been well esteemed, and Scotland has done him especial honor, yet it is our own land that has afforded him the broad field for achievement.

THE DUTCH DOMINIE

It was a commercial impulse which led to the settlement of New Amsterdam by the Dutch. But religion had share in the enterprise. These honest, prudent, adventurous traders inherited the spirit dominant in the Fatherland. They had fought with sublime fidelity in behalf of

religious liberty and civil independence. They measured the joy, they counted the cost, of a Christian home. So when they came to America they brought their religion with them. It was not long ere the little colony on Manhattan Island had a church and a school.

The dominie was an important personage in the home country. He was the occasion of not a little martial energy and achievement among his people. When he sailed across the sea, it was to fill the same office in the new land that had been consecrated by his zeal and wisdom in the old. Dominie Megapolensis was a man of intelligence and character. The Dutch were good scholars. They mixed with their book learning a fair proportion of experimental knowledge gleaned in garden, field, and street. We may therefore credit the statement that the dominies were wise counsellors in secular

affairs as well as in sacred. No sooner were they settled and the broad field of pioneer opportunity spread before them, than they proceeded to make themselves felt in the various departments of the New World activity.

It is to be taken as a matter of course that they attended strictly to their church tasks. Organization, missionary service, various institutions connected with religion, these all received proper attention. The schools also became a common object for their watchfulness and direction. It was accepted without argument that the children must be trained into intelligent citizenship. Success in trade demanded a fair degree of help from books. So the school flourished.

But the general affairs of the colony interested the dominie. And he was not afraid to preach about them or to discuss

them on the street and in the tavern. Dominie Bogardus observed certain disreputable tendencies on the part of some members in his church. "What are the great men of the country but vessels of wrath and fountains of woe and trouble?" he said, one day, in his sermon. "They think of nothing but to plunder the property of others, to dismiss, to banish, to transport to Holland." Such plainness of speech did not pass unnoted. A state of worldliness that occasioned an onset of this kind from the pulpit was quite sure to answer back without fear or favor. Some of the brethren stayed away from church, others said the dominie was drunk, while a third party had the drums beat and the cannon fired during divine service.

It was not strange that a charge of intoxication was preferred. For the times were sorry, indeed, when it came to questions of

liquor consumption. According to Stuyvesant, "Almost one full fourth part of the town of New Amsterdam" was devoted to "houses for the sale of brandy, tobacco, and beer." And these people dearly loved to meet in the tavern, Rip-Van-Winkle-like, and hold the sweet converse of smoke-blue, dram-spiced fellowship. Irving has immortalized these characteristic scenes and conditions. But the dominies, while they were willing to share a pipe and bowl and participate with moderation in the good cheer of social life, still felt compelled to raise their voices against the popular forms of dissipation and call a halt to the vice which rioted through the colony.

While we think of them as lovers of free speech and champions of freedom of worship, it is but just to remind the reader that the Dutch did not like other doctrine in the New Netherlands than "the True Reformed."

At one time a proclamation was issued, forbidding "preachers not called by ecclesiastical or temporal authority to hold meeting." The penalty for disobedience was one hundred pounds. And there was trouble for certain obnoxious sects, which shows that even the Dutch failed to live up "to their lights." Nevertheless, these old dominies, like Megapolensis, Backerus, Drisius, Schaats, Polhemus, Selyns, are an interesting company of men. Their knowledge, manhood, service, rendered them conspicuous in the colony. Dominie Jonas Michaelius, the first minister of the church in New Amsterdam, wrote: "I keep myself as far as practicable within the pale of my calling, wherein I find myself sufficiently occupied." But his successors broadened their offices and shared generously in all the affairs of the colony.

Selyns was even considered something of

a poet. The quality of his verse may be judged from certain lines on "Scolding Wives and the Third-Day Ague":

"Among the greatest plagues, one is the third-day ague;
But cross and scolding wives the greatest evil are.
With strong and prayerful minds the first will cease to plague you,
But for the last I know not what advice to dare
Except with patience all to suffer,
And ne'er the first assault to proffer."

THE VIRGINIA CLERGYMAN

The early settlers of Virginia and the contiguous territory were gentlemen. They naturally brought with them the English clergyman. It was a free, untrammelled life which featured the colony. Thackeray has made a rough sketch of it in the first part of "The Virginians." But that which particularly interests us is the "setting out" which he gives to the gentlemen "of the cloth."

"The habits and preaching of the Established clergy were not very edifying," the novelist observes. "The clergymen were paid by the state and had glebes allotted to them; and there being no Church of England bishop as yet in America, the colonists were obliged to import their divines from the mother-country. Such as came were not naturally of the best or most eloquent kind of pastors. Noblemen's hangers-on, insolvent parsons who had quarrelled with justice or the bailiff, brought their stained cassocks into the colony in hopes of finding a living there."

And Thackeray gives point to his observations by creating the character of Mr. Ward, chaplain and tutor in the family of the Virginians. Ward was a loud talker, a poor scholar, a dull fellow, a subtle flatterer, a shallow sycophant. And when George Warrington wanted to fight with him, it be-

came evident that Chaplain Ward was no gentleman.

Such a presentment prejudices one against the class named. We have something of the feeling peculiar to the Colonel, a "suspicion of all cassocks." And yet truth compels us to confess the injustice of such an opinion or the lack of charity in such a feeling. The gentlemen who settled the Southland imparted character to their religion. While they did not profess any surplus of piety, they showed that with all their indulgence, carelessness, freedom, love of sport, and sociability, they were still men of pronounced convictions upon the subject of religion, and their clergymen did very good service in their matter-of-fact and conventional way.

There was a Puritan flavor to portions of the colonial legislation which strikes us with surprise. Magistrates were instructed to

enforce attendance upon church services, a fine of one hundred hogsheads of tobacco being imposed for the first breach of this law, and severer fines for later contumacy. Such a condition was in part the result of good service on the part of the clergy.

There was a scarcity of parsons in the South, quite in contrast to the abundance of the same class in New England. And when ministers came to these vast Southern parishes, they soon were infected by a certain indolence native to the climate. As a consequence, the "Church" did not thrive to any marked degree. Education was sadly neglected. The select and favored minority enjoyed the ample life, but the neglected and poverty-stricken majority did not rise to any high plane of living.

Religion became affected with the scepti-

cism peculiar to England and her colonies. It resulted that the clergymen grew indifferent to a degree in the discharge of their duties. The law compelled them to preach in the forenoon and catechize in the afternoon. They were also ordered "not to give themselves to excess in drinking, or riot, playing at dice, cards, or any unlawful game; but at all times convenient hear or read somewhat of the Holy Scripture, always doing the things which shall appertain to honesty."

We infer that these companionable and susceptible brethren yielded to the seductions of their parishioners, and gave way freely to the tide of worldliness that threatened to flood all society at this period. At the same time, it will not do for us to single out the clergy of the South and stamp them alone with these objectionable char-

"The times" had more or less to do with the state of things in the ranks of the ministry. We are told how one Virginian clergyman became so angry with his vestry that he pulled off a vestryman's wig, and then preached the following Sunday on the text, "And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair." But the incident is paralleled by more than one show of temper among the Dutch dominies and the New England ministers.

Take them all in all, and we must conclude that the English clergymen in America proved themselves useful, worthy, important, acceptable. They did not share in public life to the extent that the brethren of the profession did in the North. Conditions were such that their functions were restricted to the tasks which centred in the

church. They were not averse to politics, but the opportunities did not come to them. The gentlemen laity kept matters under their own control. The clergy were esteemed in proportion as they minded their own business and contributed to the social life of the community.

The Dutch dominie, on the other hand, was an individual who gave himself to many tasks. His opinion in trade was not considered a thing to be ignored. He was a careful student and kept himself abreast of the times in scholarship. He preached politics on such occasions as suited his fancy. He was agreeable company and men sought his fellowship. Yet, while his part was more conspicuous than that of the English clergyman in the South, he failed to make the impression upon his people which was made by his clerical brethren in New England.

THE PARSON IN AMERICAN LITERATURE

The parson has not been especially conspicuous as a figure among the literary creations of our writers. Yet he makes various appearances. There is Longfellow's—

> "Theologian, from the school
> Of Cambridge on the Charles,
> Skilful alike with tongue and pen,
> He preached to all men everywhere
> The gospel of the Golden Rule,
> The New Commandment given to men,
> Thinking the deed and not the creed
> Would help us in our utmost need.
> With reverent feet the earth he trod,
> Nor banished nature from his plan,
> But studied still with deep research
> To build the Universal Church,
> Lofty as is the love of God,
> And ample as the wants of man."

Perhaps the work which first suggests itself in this connection is Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter." Arthur Dimmesdale is representative of none but himself. There

is never a suggestion that the sin of this struggling and condemned soul means a taint common to the Puritan ministers. Hawthorne made no attempt to draw a man who was typical of a class. The portrait is tragically individual. Yet this introspective, deeply sensitive, highly susceptible man impresses one with the fact that the bias and training peculiar to New England belong to him. There is so much in Arthur Dimmesdale (aside from his loss of virtue) which belongs distinctively to his environment, that he comes to be acknowledged as in one sense an expression of the life which featured his day and his class. As a consequence, his crime, casting its hideous shadow upon the picture, becomes an element in the prevalent conception of the colonial parson. The impression is made that these men were "no better than they should be," a current phrase applied with a certain curl

of the lip and a suggestive intonation of the voice. Not that any crime is imputed to them. Simply that they were not the high-minded, noble-spirited individuals we have been taught to believe them. "The Scarlet Letter" has, therefore, wrought to the detriment of truth and the perversion of fact to this extent. While it is the work of genius, it is a work in which genius has unconsciously or unintentionally contributed to the dissemination of erroneous opinions. We do gather vivid and lasting impressions of the ministerial character peculiar to the early days of New England while we read "The Scarlet Letter," but these impressions are not favorable to the class which now commands our consideration.

"The Minister's Wooing," by Mrs. Stowe, stands first in this service of literary revelation or photography. Dr. Hopkins is quite as much an historic study as he is the off-

spring of a sympathetic imagination. "The doctor was a philosopher, a metaphysician, a philanthropist, and in the highest and most earnest sense a minister of good on earth. . . . His early training had been all logical, not in the least æsthetic. . . . The gospel he was preaching constantly, by his pure, unworldly living, by his visitations to homes of poverty and sorrow, by his searching out of the lowly African slaves, his teaching of those whom no one else in those days had thought of teaching, and by the grand humanity, outrunning his age, in which he protested against the then-admitted system of slavery and the slave-trade. . . . Whoever looked on the forehead of the good doctor must have seen the squareness of ideality giving marked effect to its outline. As yet, ideality had dealt only with the intellectual and invisible, leading to subtle refinements of argument

and exalted ideas of morals. But there was lying in him, crude and unworked, a whole mine of those artistic feelings and perceptions which are awakened and developed only by the touch of beauty."

Now this is fine. It is true. The whole setting-forth of this preacher of righteousness is the work of a master. But Dr. Hopkins is the representative of a few marked characteristics. There were parsons that answered to his description. But when we think upon the one-sidedness of the good man, his strange ignorance of life, his weakness in face of prosaic difficulties, the utter abandonment of mind to deep problems so that nature was altogether ignored, we reach the conclusion that he fails us in our search for the typical parson of early New England. He swings as far to one extreme as does Arthur Dimmesdale to another extreme. While Dr. Hopkins car-

ries with him a large amount of flesh and blood, he seems so nearly unconscious of it that we are forced to question the reality of his existence. A deep impression is made upon the reader; but we demand a larger manhood, a broader nature, a richer sympathy, a keener insight. We are seeking that sort of parson who voices universal desires, emotions, experiences. Dr. Hopkins teaches us to think upon the parson as a man constituting a third class, set apart to pursuits and associations altogether spiritual. This conception fails to square with the facts in the case.

"A Singular Life," by Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, is a book which presents one portrait drawn with a marked insight, vigor, fidelity. For the character of Bayard approves itself not only to the high standard of taste, but likewise to our moral instincts. He is the sort of individual that we feel is

called of God to serve in the ministry. The matter of theology will occasion considerable diversity of opinion; but in respect to the important matter of soul, affection, character, he commends himself as the ideal parson. He is a man, and manhood is a prime requisite for the noblest efficiency in a parson.

It is not only pleasant to have an author emphasize this fact in a beautiful character, but it is a stroke of genius to impress upon the reader that such holy ideal of service is cherished by the fraternity. For whatever may be said in respect to clerical shortcomings and delinquencies, it still remains true that men push with fervent eagerness toward this exalted conception of ministerial worth. And literature appears deficient in giving the parson credit for this great, inspiring ideal.

"Bayard stood bareheaded in the color of

the red sun." They were holding a beach service, just on the borders of the waning day. "He was pale, notwithstanding the warmth of the evening, and had a look so worn that those who loved him most felt unspoken fear like the grip of a hand at their hearts. . . . Was it magic or was it miracle? Was it holiness or eloquence? Did he speak with the tongue of man or angel? Where was the secret? What was the charm? . . . Bayard's manner was quiet, finished, and persuasive; it must have appealed to the most fastidious oratorical taste; any instructor in homiletics might have seen in it a remarkable illustration of the power of consecrated education over ignorance and vice. . . . It would be difficult to say what it was in Emanuel Bayard that most attracted them: whether his sincerity or his intellect, his spirituality or his manliness; or that mystical charm which comes

not of striving, or of prayer, or of education, the power of an elect personality. Perhaps it would be nearer the truth to say that the fishermen loved him because he loved them."

And as this great soul moves on to the tragic end, what homage to the "Christman" and his brother workmen do we pay?

Mr. Aldrich's "Parson Hawkins" and the "Dr. Johns" of Donald G. Mitchell are excellent contributions to this literature of parson life. There are many traits of Puritan character reflected in them. We are constrained to think that men of such spirit did notable service for their people and the world.

Without naming further examples of the parson in fiction, it seems *à propos* to observe that American writers generally show a finer appreciation of his work and manhood than English.

But the parson seems to hold a quite subordinate place as a literary creation. Is it because historians often fail to give him credit for his active, fruitful services?

THE PARSON IN AMERICAN HISTORY

There are numerous general acknowledgments of his eminence and leadership; but too seldom do writers enter upon details. Professor Park, in "Indebtedness of the State to the Clergy," observes that the name of a pastor is seldom mentioned by an historian. He also quotes a remark of Dr. Channing, that history "has not a place even in the margin for the minister and the school-mistress."

The parson is one who has had to do with the inner life and the immediate experiences of his people. Not the less on that account, however, has he been a tremendous influence and a vital factor in all the events of his day. While there are writers who contend that the parson in New England made

himself offensively predominant, yet we believe that such writers misinterpret history. He was "the power behind the throne" on many of the great occasions. It was not modesty so much as expediency that held him in reserve. He was at one time somewhat like Savonarola at Florence, a sort of dictator. But he was wiser than the Florentine leader. The parson kept himself discreetly in the background; shaped affairs through his heedful servants, the magistrates; did not obtrude his interference in state matters; taught, inspired, moved, directed the state at the same time that he was simply identified by the popular mind with the church and religion. Ministers refused on occasions without number to go into the active conduct of political affairs.

There were instances when the parson yielded his sacred office and served his colony in some other capacity. Jonathan

Trumbull was educated for the ministry, but he went into business and then studied law. Such cases, however, were exceptions. The parson was quite as efficient at second-hand, working through the constituency which was dominated by his preaching and instruction. But the fact of his prominence is easily minimized by the historian without the slightest aim or thought to do him injustice or mis-state the case.

Is it not true, also, that the colonial parson of New England does not receive his full meed of praise and appreciation, for the reason that the Puritan character itself is misconceived on the part of many writers? Mr. Howells, in "The Minister's Charge," gives us Sewall, a parson of good spirit and excellent parts, a man with whom we should like to make friends. Yet Mr. Sewall "declared that he envied the ministers of the good old times, who had only to teach their

people that they would be lost if they did not do right. It was much simpler than to make them understand that they were often to be good for reasons not immediately connected with their present or future comfort." It is true that eternal punishment was a favorite theme among the colonial parsons; but the man who thinks they narrowed their preaching to such themes or kindred themes, is mistaken. The variety of topics treated and the manifold ways of setting forth the subject in hand, are assuredly marked features of the colonial period.

A recent book, which sketches in a bright way the colonial parson under a variety of circumstances, gives what might be termed the popular conception of the Puritan in "good old colony times, when we lived under the king."

Palfrey wrote that the Puritan stands for the "manliness of England;" but this writer

observes, "It is truer to say that he represented the obstinate wilfulness of the English race." "It is well known," he continues, "that here [New England] they became intolerant and unmerciful." This is accounted for "by the fact that they were disciples of John Calvin." What this writer is pleased to call the composite Puritan is, according to his definition, "a peculiar mixture of human beings." Middle-class Englishmen that had no representatives of art, science, literature, statesmanship, or social life; a few merchants and lawyers, with yeomen, mechanics, servants, and idlers; "mixed Huguenots, Germans, Scotch prisoners sent by Cromwell, and white slaves imported from Ireland to be sold;" and the "abundant offspring of miscegenation between the Indian and the white races." This is termed the composite Puritan. The parson, of course, is counted not only

an element in this result, but the result of such elements.

The portrait of the minister is, therefore, not altogether pleasing. One feels a certain repugnance as he continues to look upon the picture. And the opinion seems to gain currency that the colonial parson of New England was an individual inheriting numerous disagreeable traits of character, living out his narrow ideas with rigid and uncompromising doggedness; given over to severe and cruel treatment of the young, the weak, the bad, the contrary; shutting out the sunshine of life from the home and the community; creating an atmosphere of gloom like to the most dismal November weather.

Not only has the word "Puritan" come to be associated in the minds of many among us with repellant and objectionable characteristics, but the Puritan minister has been

identified with about all that was painful and unhappy in the life of our respected, hard-pressed, misinterpreted ancestors. "The poor parsons" is a current phrase. Imagination is given the privilege of taking the word "poor" just as it pleases.

Now there are few more interesting and suggestive characters in the history of New England. The parson lived a life that was uniquely conspicuous. He wrote himself with strong, deep lines into the conditions and the events of this land. "Who patient is and right, his day shall yet arise." There never before came to him such an opportunity. And the fact is wrought into the tissues and fibres of our social fabric that the colonial parson was a match for his singular and pre-eminent opportunity.

The very name applies with noteworthy fitness. Parson is simply another form of

person. Parson was emphatically and accreditedly the person. Not in this case because he had submitted to any prelatical imposition of hands and by virtue of his office was the chief personage of the community; but the parson was the person generally speaking, for the reason that he inherently stood for the things of chief concern. He was elected to his position by virtue of his worth and fitness.

Among the company of emigrants that settled New England during the first twenty years, there were seventy-seven ministers and sixteen theological students. These men were graduates of the universities, men endowed with rare gifts, coming from honorable families. They represented the worthiest stock of the mother country. The percentage of this class was so large that it occasioned the oft-quoted remark of Cotton, that "there was nothing cheap in

New England but milk and ministers." But the large proportion of educated parsons was a fortunate and important circumstance connected with the settlement of our land.

THE PARSON'S BOYHOOD AND ORDINATION

THE PARSON'S BOYHOOD AND ORDINATION.

"THE May-morn of his youth" is a period bound to be bright and songful. And the boys in the Puritan family enjoyed their peculiar sports and associations. They might not have the means of entertainment that had been left in Old England; but they had nature, wild beasts, Indians, perilous times, love-making, and various other means of an active, interesting experience.

Boyhood under these conditions was favorable to merit and success. Home became a nursery of that which was best and most promiseful in character. The native bent of the boy was investigated with loving scrutiny. The unfolding personality was bedewed with the prayers and the influences of

godly parents. And yet we are not to think of these sons of the colonies as puny, inoffensive, effeminate young people. The times were such that rugged traits of character abounded. Pioneer struggle fostered the manly virtues.

Although children were what might be termed the absolute property of their parents, yet the exuberant and masterful nature was just as common and quite as difficult to train as two hundred years later.

Joseph Webb was fourteen years old when he entered Harvard College. He had been reared near Boston and had enjoyed the privileges of excellent Christian nurture. Nevertheless he was noisy, mischievous, self-conceited, and domineering. When he reached the sophomore year, he abused the freshman that did fag service for him. The result is found in the history of the college: "Whereas great complaints have been made

and proved against Joseph Webb for his abusive carriages in requiring some of the freshmen to go upon his private errands and in striking such freshmen, and for his scandalous negligence to those duties . . . he is therefore sentenced in the first place to be deprived of the pension hitherto allowed him, and also to be expelled from college."

No wonder that he was brought to time by such a severe penalty, and that he wrote the authorities: "I do, with grief and sorrow, humbly acknowledge these my great offences and the justice of your proceedings against me for them, and crave pardon and pray that I may be restored unto my former standing in the college." This was in 1684. Some sixteen years later this young man was one of ten ministers here in Connecticut engaged in the organization of Yale College.

It is true that these Puritan youth were reared with solemn strictness. Nathaniel

Mather might whittle on the Sabbath-day behind the door, and then feel that a "great reproach of God" was upon him for such conduct. But "youth is a continual intoxication," and this spirit of lively satisfaction in growing powers and expanding opportunities cannot be repressed.

> "How beautiful is youth, how bright it gleams
> With its illusions, aspirations, dreams,
> Book of beginnings, story without end,
> Each maid a heroine and each man a friend."

We must therefore discount the impressions which old chroniclers of our colonial days make upon us. Youth will infuse its own spirit of buoyancy into the routine of life, and Cotton Mather writes that "the youth in this country are very sharp and early ripe in their capacities."

We see, then, our parson that is to be, reared in a Christian home, surrounded by healthful relations, encouraged to share in

all manly acquirements and activities, gathering into his responsive personality the streams of influence which make for truth, patriotism, independence, intellectuality.

While the ministers that emigrated to New England did not have to experience in boyhood the hardships and disciplines peculiar to pioneer life, yet they were subjected to restraints and instructions quite as varied and fruitful. The boyhood of such men as Cotton, Stone, Williams, Hooker, Davenport, was a period filled with striking and important incidents. These men and their fellow-ministers were blessed with a rare home training. And they enjoyed the fine privileges of the English universities in the years of ferment and transition. Such influences manifest themselves in the work done by these great leaders through the later years.

But we are not to think that boyhood and youth in New England passed without its

fair share of characteristic opportunities. It was soon after the settlement of the country that Harvard College was founded and a school cherished in order to prepare the youth for the important mission of the parson.

President Dwight described what he calls "the progress of every clergyman . . . until he arrives at the desk. . . . From infancy to manhood his whole character is subjected to the inspection of his parents, of his school-master, of the parish in which he is born and bred, of the government of the college in which he is educated, of the church to which he is united, and of the clergyman by whom he is instructed in theology."

It certainly was a feature which had much to commend it, that the young man was placed in the family of some good minister and there received a training for his work

that was thoroughly practical. He might not get the breadth of culture which characterizes our modern schools of divinity, but he was enabled to get swiftly into the heart of the people and come to an early comprehension of his great life task. He was licensed to preach when his studies were completed, and then began the peripatetic experience known as candidating.

But the event of prime importance was his ordination. These occasions interested the family of the candidate, the parish which he was to serve, and the neighboring churches affiliated with his particular church. The records give us very fair pictures of these noteworthy events. The young man having candidated, the ecclesiastical society and the church-members unite in giving him a call. A letter of acceptance is written. The day is set for ordination. A council assembles on the appointed occasion.

Neighboring churches are represented by pastor and delegates. The work of examination is first taken in hand. This may consume an entire day. They were thorough in these matters some generations past. On the second day the public services occur, with the order something as follows, according to the description of Dr. Dwight: A psalm, a prayer, a psalm, a sermon, a consecrating prayer, a charge to the minister, a charge to the people, a right hand of fellowship, a prayer, a psalm, an evangelical blessing.

These were solemn occasions, we know. The diaries of various men record the impressions made upon them and the great aspirations and purposes stirred within them. We would not detract by one word from the significance of these memorable experiences. But truth compels us to say that the ordination was considered a great social

event, so that much of its spiritual character was obscured so far as the general public were concerned. It was an occasion of generous feasting. Provisions were supplied with a devout and loving amplitude. The hearty eating and the abundant talking excited the thirst of hosts and guests. It must not surprise one, therefore, that among the bills run up on these occasions was one of large proportions for drinks. Cider was always abundant and acceptable. It was taken as a matter of course that one might drink any amount of it. But other beverages than cider were furnished. Here is a bill for an ordination in 1785:

30 Bowles of Punch before the People went to meeting.

10 Bottles of wine before they went to meeting.

44 Bowles of Punch while at dinner.

18 Bottles of wine.

8 Bowles of Brandy.

Cherry Rum (quantity not mentioned).

Now it is manifest that when the congregation had disposed of such an amount of drink exclusive of cider, a certain measure of free-and-easy fellowship must prevail, the social instincts of young and old would respond to the favorable conditions, and there must ensue lively times. It was quite natural that the young people should desire to work off the excitement of festivity by such a curious anomaly as the ordination ball. These frivolous conclusions did not always follow. There were times not a few when the seriousness of the occasion pervaded the people; but we get the impression that at ordinations the social features were emphasized to such extent that people learned to look with gladsome anticipation and remembrance upon the event which

called them together in such delightful fellowship.

We must bear in mind that the use of liquors was universal through those days. When the fathers met in synod at Cambridge in 1648, there was a liquor bill in connection with the expense of the meeting. At the ordination of Edwin Jackson in Woburn, 1729, the town paid for six and one-half barrels of cider, twenty-five gallons of wine, two gallons of brandy, four gallons of rum. Thomas Smith wrote in his diary, January 16, 1765, concerning what might be called the personal aftermath of Samuel Foxcroft's ordination in New Gloucester: "We had a pleasant journey home. Mr. Longfellow was alert and kept us all merry. A jolly ordination. We lost sight of decorum." Such a note in one journal may be matched by another from the diary of John Emerson, of Conway: "Oct. 20th.

Put in the cellar for winter use, 38 barrels of cider."

Now it may be well for us to recall these festive occasions, if for no other purpose, to the end that we may feel how our ancestors were not opposed to good-cheer and agreeable fellowship. We deplore the excesses which occasionally get recorded in the journals of these men, at the same time we are taught that a fair measure of sociability prevailed.

THE AGRICULTURAL PARSON

THE AGRICULTURAL PARSON.

It was once the custom to consult the minister concerning agricultural matters. Parsonage land was often given him as a settlement gratuity. This necessitated a familiarity with the soil. The parson to-day is perhaps the last man in the community that would be able to assist in the tasks of farming, yet we are convinced that his former apprenticeship to such pursuits was a gain to him rather than a loss; not only by way of living but also by way of influence. Farming was common to the large portion of the community. The minister had much in common with the majority of his parishioners, therefore, when it came to agriculture. A fellow-feeling was engendered. And without doubt the health of the minister was

preserved to an extraordinary degree by his contact with the soil.

There were numerous model farmers among the parsons. Their reputation was widespread. Jared Eliot, of Killingly, was one of them. Dr. Goodrich, of Durham, was another. William Robinson, of Southington, was a third. Probably these men would have been placed in the front had the county fair been organized at the time. Certain it is that their opinions were considered worth careful heed, and on many occasions these brethren turned from the strain of theological warfare to the more quiet and peaceful setting forth of ideas and experiences connected with the breeding of cattle, the raising of grain, and the culture of fruit.

Such relief was invaluable to parson and people. It saved the parson from complete absorption in the abstruse and disquieting questions of predestination, sovereignty,

hell; it saved the people from the deeper darkness and the more perplexing uncertainties of too-frequent and insistent preaching along these lines. For the vigor of the farmer-preacher was apt to show itself in his sermon work, although at times it showed itself in quite unexpected and extraordinary ways. Mr. Morgan, of Greenwich, gravitated between farm and pulpit until he finally settled down permanently upon the farm. A company of church-members was discussing the comparative merits of their ministers. At length one venerable deacon observed: "Wa'll, our minister gives so much attention to his farm and orchard that we get pretty poor sermons, but he is mighty movin' in prayer in caterpillar and cankerworm time."

This agricultural experience gave the parson many opportunities to point moral instruction; he often gained a practical insight into character that proved of incalcul-

able benefit to him; he learned the crookedness of the human heart; he conceived remedies and corrections that frequently served with fine effectiveness. One straight-spoken minister was annoyed because his neighbors helped themselves with unstinted liberty to the fruits of his excellent orchard. There came a time when he felt constrained to speak of it. He therefore gave notice from his pulpit that the yellow sweet apples in the northeast corner of his orchard would be ripe by next Wednesday. The individuals in the habit of picking his apples were requested to wait until that date ere they gathered them. Tradition has it that such public announcement put an end to the unneighborly business.

It is fitting to observe that the apple-tree was cultivated with uncommon zeal. It was not alone that the fruit became an important

article of diet, but it was also that the juice of the fruit was squeezed into a popular form of drink. This fact occasioned the public gratitude of one simple-minded and business-like parson, who said in his harvest prayer: "We thank Thee, we thank Thee, also for the many barrels of cider Thou hast vouchsafed us," a form of thanksgiving which has been relegated to the days of the past.

Some years ago when one of our prominent ministers retired from his parish, after a long period of successful service, it was currently reported that he still had on hand some fifty written sermons which he had never preached. It had been his custom to anticipate sermon work and keep a goodly stock of carefully prepared discourses for various occasions.

The devotion to agriculture which characterized one of the colonial parsons was such

that he did all his sermon work between December and April. Having completed his one hundred discourses within the five winter months, he was free to give his mind unto the farm for the rest of the year. As these were the days when men laid out large schemes of divinity and frequently stuck to the beaten track of theological discussion for many months, it is conceivable that such a method might be adopted without the rebellion of the parish. So far as intellectual effort was concerned, this mode of procedure was equivalent to a seven months' summer vacation. Doubtless the good man returned to his sermon work in December with the same freshness and zeal which manifested themselves when he plunged into agricultural pursuits in May time.

These were the days of small things. The salaries, as we observed, were meagre, one hundred pounds being considered a fair

stipend. But there were many parsons who did not receive even so modest a sum as this, so that necessity compelled them to turn the hand to secular pursuits.

It was before the days of life insurance, therefore the parson did not have that alluring and elastic sphere of usefulness. He might run a mill, as did Samuel Danforth, of Taunton. The real-estate business had already suggested itself as a vocation, so that he might combine the transfer of houses and lands with the oversight of souls, as did George Shove, of Teucton (this parson was likewise a husbandman); but farming presented the largest inducements and the most tangible results.

In old England the clergyman rented his lands and received tithes. But in New England the land given to the minister was generally land that he cultivated for a living. He did not engage in gentleman-farming, a

thing which grows in popular favor to-day. He was a practical laborer. His occasional writing upon the subject was eminently serious and instructive. While the agricultural paper or the agricultural column of the weekly journal did not exist, he still contributed certain literary results.

Dr. Jared Eliot wrote "Essays upon Field Husbandry in New England," and it was most excellent and suggestive writing in behalf of agriculture. He won enviable fame by it.

When the father of Timothy Dwight suddenly passed out of life, a family of thirteen children was left bereaved and dependent. The young parson moved to Northampton with his mother and the brothers and sisters; and there he threw himself with zeal into farming. Preaching hither and thither as opportunity came on Sundays, he spent not a little portion of the week days in

the management and cultivation of his land. This service was continued until the call to Greenfield Hill was accepted and the family removed with him to that beautiful rural parish.

That such experience contributed to the usefulness of the minister is generally conceded. We see that it was invaluable to him in the matter of health. It certainly added to his income.

One faithful parson was severely handled by his people because he made some eight hundred dollars by selling produce from his land. There were numerous examples of generous and hospitable living which reverted to the honest and efficient labors of the parson and his family on the farm. The days of homespun gave the farmer-parson just as good an opportunity to provide for himself as it did his neighbor the deacon.

But it is also to be remembered that the

minister's acres afforded his boys a fitting opportunity to expend their surplus energy. When John, Samuel, Thomas, Jeremiah, and the rest of them felt the workings of youthful spirits within them, there was nothing safer and more profitable by way of generous outlet than a few days' hard work upon the parsonage land. It did not take a long time to reduce the riotous fury of boyhood and youth to reasonable and seemly bounds of decorum. Meanwhile the parson's family was becoming inured to work and yielding the peaceable fruits of righteousness in ways eminently satisfactory to parents and the parish.

It is also to be noted that such familiarity with nature on the part of thoughtful and observant children had its helpful, refining influences. While the Puritan did not have the means of culture common to the mother country, yet the lessons which are taught us

by a beautiful flora, a varied landscape, the moods and passions of changeful nature, these were all distributed with prodigality. They did more and more to nourish fine sentiments and develop good taste through the years. These results are therefore to be counted among the benefits of rural life and agricultural pursuits.

"Beneath the open sky abroad,
Among the plants and breathing things,
The sinless, peaceful works of God,
I'll share the calm the season brings."

Is it too much for us to believe that such associations, rendered suggestive by acquaintance with books and scholars, had much to do with shaping the later character and development of the sons and daughters of the Puritans?

"That delicate forest flower,
With scented breath and look so like a smile,
Seems, as it issues from the shapeless mould,
An emanation of the indwelling Life,

A visible token of the upholding Love
That are the soul of this wide universe.
My heart is awed within me when I think
Of the great miracle that still goes on
In silence round me, the perpetual work
Of Thy creation, finished yet renewed
Forever. Written on Thy works I read
The lesson of Thy own eternity.

. . . . .

"Be it ours to meditate
In these calm shades, thy milder majesty,
And to the beautiful order of thy works
Learn to conform the order of our lives."

THE POLITICAL PARSON

THE POLITICAL PARSON.

It was the natural course for the ministers to pursue—this taking active part in the politics of the new country. The situation in old England had taught them to have a hand in affairs. The parson's interest in the future of his adopted land was not less keen than that of any other citizen. He had made political matters a study in connection with things ecclesiastical. The little state on board the *Mayflower* became a little church. It was inevitable under the circumstances that the parson should exert controlling influence in state life.

It was said of John Cotton "that whatever he delivered in the pulpit was soon put into an order of court, if of a civil, or set up as a practice in church, if of an ecclesiastical con-

cernment." It was in the mind of the settlers to rear a theocracy. The Bible was the one book to which constant reference was made. It furnished the basis for law and procedure, and the minister was the man best versed in the Scriptures, so that constant reference was made to him by way of help to an understanding and application of God's Word.

Dr. Walker has illustrated very forcibly the importance of the parson as a statesman in his sketch of Thomas Hooker. The letter of Hooker to Winthrop and the sermon preached by Hooker at an adjourned session, probably of the April court in Hartford, 1638, witness to the fact that he proposed and outlined that system of government which has proved infinitely important to this land and the progress of the world.

It was Hooker that said, "The foundation of authority is laid in the free consent of the

people," and that "the choice of magistrates belongs unto the people by God's own allowance" and that "they who have power to appoint officers and magistrates, have the right also to set the bounds and limitations of the power and place unto which they call them." The constitution which resulted, observes John Fiske, was the "first written constitution known to history that created a government, and it marked the beginnings of American democracy, of which Thomas Hooker deserves more than any other man to be called the father." Such service and eminence in this domain of thought were enough to evoke the gratitude of the ages for the New England parson.

It was another minister, Nathaniel Ward, of Ipswich, that prepared for Massachusetts "The Body of Liberties," the earliest written code of the colony, adopted by the General Court in 1641. John Cotton had also been

appointed by the General Court in 1636 to prepare a scheme of laws for the government of the colony, but Ward's "Body of Liberties" was preferred. The Mosaic code was always kept in mind by these godly men, and they endeavored to conform to it in so far as it was practicable.

It was John Cotton that preached to the deputies in 1634. They were to elect the officers who were to conduct the affairs of the little state. What more reasonable than that they should seek the wisdom and guidance of the minister? He was just as deeply interested in the political phases of their life as in the religious. Indeed there was no distinction made between the two. This preaching to the deputies by John Cotton set the fashion of election sermons. It soon became the customary way to assemble the men who were to attend upon this important business and give them over to the instruc-

tions of the parson. On one of these occasions it is said that the Rev. Mr. Wilson climbed into a tree and converted it into a pulpit. From such lofty perch he gave his election message, and thus gained the satisfaction of reaching a large and interested throng of listeners.

When the Indian chief, Miantonomo, was put in the hands of our ancestors and the question of procedure in the case troubled the men in office, it was the natural thing to refer the matter to a committee of ministers, picked from the members of the synod convened at Cambridge. They were a sort of ultimate authority in many a complex question of state.

John Davenport was not afraid to hide the regicides Goffe and Whalley in his own house in New Haven, when they came to him in 1661. And when their pursuers were expected, he was not afraid to preach from

the text, "Hide the outcasts, bewray not him that wandereth. Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler" (Isaiah xvi. 3, 4.) Such a course was political testimony of the most effective character.

These men dealt with public affairs in a masterful way. They were neither timid nor reserved in respect to their course. While it did not seem wise for the parson to take the actual administration of political matters into his own personal control, and serve the colony or community as magistrate, law-maker, governor, nevertheless appeal was made to him on important occasions and his were the shaping influences manifest in the trend of things. Increase Mather, of the North Church, Boston, was bitterly opposed to the government of Charles II. During the Revolution of 1688, he was busily engaged with affairs of state

in England. When he returned to America, he brought back with him a new royal charter and he had the privilege of nominating his friend, Sir William Phips, as governor, to the King.

When we consider the peculiar relations which sacred and secular affairs bore to each other, how town meetings were frequently or regularly held in many of the meeting-houses, how such assemblages were often called in connection with the mid-week lecture, how the same men generally constituted the two meetings, how religious purposes dominated the people whether they met for Christian worship or political action, —when we consider these things, it becomes quite apparent that the parson was in the majority of cases pre-eminently the leading man in the community, the individual that embodied the highest ideals and set forth the vital principles of common activity.

In Connecticut, as late as 1708, it was ordered that "the ministers of the Gospel should preach a sermon on the day appointed by law for the choice of civil rulers, proper for the direction of the town in the work before them." We know that in many cases such presentation of truth and such wisdom of counsel was given as to determine the policy of the little community. For every question that bore upon the moral, civic, political, social life of the people was considered with a minuteness of detail that would appal a modern congregation. The minister was not only present at town meeting but he was expected to open it with prayer, and the occasion might arise when he took quite as large a part in the discussion as any other citizen.

It is true that with the generations there came changes in respect to the parson's share in the life of his times. But it is well for us

to remember that he never arrogated to himself power or authority. Dr. Stephen West, of Stockbridge, had six judges of the Massachusetts courts among his parishioners. His influence upon them was one of the notable features of his ministry, a remark which might be truthfully repeated concerning a large proportion of these ministers.

The elder President Dwight puts it wisely when he says: "The real weight of clergymen in New England, particularly in Massachusetts and Connecticut, consists wholly in their influence; an influence derived from their office and their conduct." And we find no more vivid and beautiful illustration of this fact than in the years which preceded the struggle for American Independence and the years of that conflict itself. One Connecticut parson raised a volunteer company within the bounds of his own parish and

then entered the war as captain of it—a Bradley of Branford.

Many of the ministers became chaplains and made themselves of inestimable value to the cause of liberty. Judah Champion, of Litchfield, who entered the army as chaplain later, was conducting divine service in his church when he was interrupted by the entrance of a courier. A scrap of paper was put into the parson's hand. He read it: "St. John is taken." "Thank God for the victory!" he exclaimed. "Amen and amen," replied the chorister. Then the patriotic parson recited the needs of our troops, picturing their sufferings, kindling the enthusiasm of his hearers. It was Sunday, but such a flame of practical loyalty had been kindled that people went home to spin, knit, sew, and do all sorts of things to alleviate the sufferings of their precious

The spirit manifest by Dr. Daggett, of New Haven—professor in the Divinity School—was a characteristic spirit. When Tryon, of contemptible memory, burned the city, Dr. Daggett was observed standing in a little clump of bushes blazing away at the British with all his might. Soldiers were sent to investigate the single-handed and solitary warrior. When the commanding officer and his small band came upon him, the officer exclaimed:

"What are you doing there, you old fool, firing on His Majesty's troops?"

The busy doctor of divinity replied, "Exercising the rights of war."

This astonished and amused the British officer, so he said with some indulgent appreciation of the thing:

"If I let you go this time, you rascal, will you ever fire again upon the troops of His

"Nothing more likely," grimly answered the clerical hero.

So they took him prisoner, made him march through the heat and the dust to another part of the town, and finally cast him one side.

It was Dr. Goodrich, of Dunham, who said from his pulpit during these eventful days: "Let the young woman refuse to give her heart and hand to the young man who will not give his heart and hand to the war for the independence of the state." And many a man did what Andrew Eliot, Jr., did in Fairfield, namely, relinquish a part or the whole of his salary on account of the common poverty, and still continue to minister, battling with circumstances to the best of his ability.

Great work was done by the parsons in arousing public sentiment and firing the souls of men with patriotism. Mark Leaven-

worth, of Waterbury, was one of these earnest men. It was he that came to his church under the conditions of a £500 bond to be paid to the church in case he should become an Episcopalian any time within twenty years. The bond was cancelled after a few years. Mr. Leavenworth served as chaplain in the French war, and he was appointed in 1776 by the General Assembly of Connecticut "to arouse and animate the people." We may well believe that he did his part in that important task.

Their very prayers were colored by the intensity of their patriotism, although an occasional slip is recorded. One of these good men, passing unconsciously into the stereotyped petition for "our excellent King George," corrected himself by adding parenthetically, "O Lord, I mean George Washington," which proved satisfactory to his watchful congregation and emphasized the

fact of his prayer for the cause of Independence.

Gurdon Saltonstall was another of these parson-statesmen. A man of large culture, excellent spirit, keen insight, broad sympathies, he was often consulted by his friend and parishioner, Governor Fitz John Winthrop. When the man of government became ill, Mr. Saltonstall aided him in the conduct of public affairs. His help was of such character that, on the death of Winthrop, he was chosen to succeed him. For sixteen years Governor Saltonstall remained in office, discharging his many duties with eminent ability and leaving to his people the inheritance of many agreeable memories. The Synod of Saybrook was convened in accordance with his wishes. The first printing-press in the colony was introduced by him in 1709.

Elisha Williams, minister in Wethersfield,

represented his people in the legislature and was also made a judge of the superior court. Daniel Hopkins, one of the Salem parsons, was a member of the Provincial Congress in 1775 as well as the Council of the Conventional Government in 1778.

But the parson's best work was done by way of incentive and persuasion. In Gordon's "History of the American Revolution," there appears the following letter:

"Rev. Sir: We cannot but acknowledge the goodness of Heaven, in constantly supplying us with preachers of the Gospel, whose concern has been the temporal and spiritual happiness of his people. In a day like this, when all the friends of civil and religious liberty are exerting themselves to deliver this country from its present calamities, we cannot but place great hopes in an order of men who have ever distinguished themselves in their country's cause; and do

therefore recommend to the ministers of the Gospel, in the several towns and other places in this colony, that they assist us in avoiding that dreadful slavery with which we are now threatened."

THE LITERARY PARSON

THE LITERARY PARSON.

THE literature of colonial days was narrow and meagre, but the minister was generally the creator of the few books circulated. It was not that he was the only educated man among the people, but rather that his mind seemed to move in the way of literary expression. He lived among books, although the number of books in his library was necessarily small, and he was preeminently a man of one book, so that all his literary tasks were colored by his devout and suggestive familiarity with the Bible. Then he made a large use of classical literature, which was the staple material used in university instruction. Copious quotations

from Greek and Latin authors were mingled with frequent passages from the Sacred Scriptures in all the books and pamphlets which these scholars wrote.

The realm of theology claimed first attention. Discourses from the pulpit often made a complete system of Christian doctrine, the course of sermons continuing months or years.

Various important works were first presented in this way. The multiplicity of books upon doctrinal and metaphysical themes was simply appalling. Increase Mather left behind him eighty-five publications. His son, Cotton Mather, bequeathed three hundred and eighty-two unto posterity; and they were predominantly theological in character. Above his study door were the words, "Be short." This was a prime necessity with visitors, else the diligent writer had never finished his many books and at-

tended to the common details of life and the pastorate. One feels little drawing toward this mass of literary matter, but the "Magnalia" is certainly an interesting and valuable work, characteristic of the man, rich in quaint phraseology, witty sayings, curious quips, and suggestive figures of speech.

The most famous among these theological writers was Jonathan Edwards. His work survives upon the shelves of scholars today. It is truly monumental in character and elects him to a place among the great minds of the ages. It is with peculiar interest that we think of him. The work which he had faithfully done in Northampton seemed to end prematurely and with disaster. As he went into the isolation of missionary service among the Indians, hope burned dimly within his soul. But his loneliness and disappointment did not trammel him in the great work to which God called

him. The book on "The Freedom of the Human Will" was written, and the advancement to the presidency of Princeton College followed, so that when he forfeited his brief life through devotion to science, a majestic task had been achieved and an imperishable fame assured. We count him the great thinker of New England and the new nation. We count him *one* of the great thinkers of the English-speaking world.

Not a little of the writing done by the colonial parson was ecclesiastical in its nature. The policy of the churches was explained, illustrated, and defended. Many a controversy waged with furious earnestness. Mr. Hobart attacked Episcopacy when it began its inroads in the country, and the controversialists did not mince matters when personalities were broached.

We speak of these men as lacking imagination. Charles Chauncey, the second, used

to say that he wished somebody would translate Milton's "Paradise Lost" into prose so that he might understand it. But when it came to heated discussion upon religious or political matters the writers of the various ages were manifestly fertile and ingenious in all sorts of curious fancies and conceits. Many a strange and original turn was given to language by these men. It is an interesting study—their versatility of expression and their striking mastery of phrases.

The parson was not devoid of poetical sentiment and aspiration. We must bear in mind that pioneer struggles are not favorable to the muses. There were more serious and important tasks on hand than writing songs and gathering flowers of rhetoric. Nevertheless some of these men claimed the title of poet. The "Bay Psalm Book" was their most important and influential contribution to this department of literature. It

had not a little to do with forming public opinion and quickening mental impulse favorable to the writing of poetry.

Although many of these men adventured into rhyme, yet they did it with a certain commendable reserve and modesty. Nathaniel Ward, of Ipswich, speaking of their propensity to attempt poetry, observes, "I can impute it to nothing but to the flatuousness of our diet." "The Simple Cobbler of Agawam" is the interesting product of this poet-preacher. One would scarce put it in the same category as Milton's "Comus" or Butler's "Hudibras," but it did well enough for a vent to the so-called poetical impulses of the author.

Michael Wigglesworth, described as "a little, feeble shadow of a man," believed that he was writing poetry when he composed "The Day of Doom." Its success did not a little to encourage his contemporaries and

successors to immolate themselves upon the "Altar of Song."

These good men had a way "of falling into poetry," as it has been feelingly and graphically described. The grave-yards were full of it; and truth compels us to say that it were hard to find a more congenial and more fitting place for it than the cemetery. Here it did less evil by way of association and more good by way of emotional outlet. Mr. Woodbridge's eulogy on John Cotton is a very good example of the work done in this peculiar and popular line of composition. The poet speaks of the eminent man as—

> "A living, breathing Bible, tables where
> Both Covenants, at large, engraven were.
>
> . . . . .
>
> O what a monument of glorious worth
> When in a new edition he comes forth,
> Without erratas, may we think he'll be
> In leaves and covers of eternity."

The literature of eulogy and "epitaphy" in New England is peculiarly rich and "moving," although the moving element which abounds favors laughter rather than tears. Not a little of our modern wit finds its genesis in the ancient graveyard.

David Humphries and Joel Barlow were both ministers, although they gave the strength of their genius to other pursuits than that of the ministry. But with all that can be said in respect to the poetry of colonial life we speedily reach the conclusion that the less said the better so far as the good of poetry is concerned.

These parsons were interesting writers of history. The narrative flowed along without much regard to consecutiveness of events or balance and proportion of discourse; but it made an invaluable record, and we are quite dependent upon these quaint and original excursions into the field of reminiscence and

observation. The State of Massachusetts paid Mr. Hubbard, of Ipswich, £50 for his history of New England. It is a mine from which we still gather more or less treasure.

The "Magnalia" of Mather is of course like to no other work ever printed.

It is sweet to be remembered even with such a portraiture as that given of Mr. Ralph Partridge. Mather starts with the text, "'Twas as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains." "Among the many worthy persons who were persecuted into an American wilderness . . . there was one that bore the name as well as the state of a hunted partridge. . . . This was Mr. Ralph Partridge, who for no fault but the delicacy of his good spirit, being distressed by the ecclesiastical setters, had no defence neither of beak nor claw, but a flight over the ocean. . . . This partridge had not only the innocency of the dove . . . but also the

loftiness of an eagle, in the great soar of his intellectual abilities. . . . The church of Duxbury had such an eagle in their partridge. . . . Mr. Partridge was, notwithstanding the paucity and poverty of his congregation, so afraid of anything that looked like a bird wandering from his nest, that he remained with his poor people till he took wing to become a bird of paradise, along with the winged seraphim of heaven."

These parsons were admirable writers of adventure. They had the adventures in the first place, which insisted upon being written up for the coming generations. Then they had the spirit and the imagination to deal with the material in their possession. A strict study of the times inclines one to think that imagination played not an insignificant part in these papers. I do not mean that there was ever a purpose to mis-state or convey wrong impressions; simply that nature,

surroundings, events assumed startling, suggestive forms to their minds, and they wrote with the frankness and simplicity of children. The books upon witchcraft and the wonders observed during these early days are good illustrations of our meaning.

But the works which strike us as most interesting are the journals kept by these men and the fragments of biography transmitted to us. Brainerd revealed his very soul in his diaries. The pictures of the days in which he lived are exceedingly vivid. It is like standing at some window which commands an endless stretch of landscape and viewing "the landscape o'er" until the eye tires of its straining.

While George Eliot may feel that biographies are the bane of literature, yet we believe Carlyle has the right of it in saying that they are the most universally profitable of books. So the reader has sim-

ply to turn to the numerous reminiscences which embalm the memory of these old parsons and there rises before him the goodly company of worthies, instinct with the spirit of their age, alive to the needs of men, faithful to reflect the life common to their kind. Dr. Dwight portrays the parson in the fifth part of his poem on Greenfield Hill:

"His face, the image of his mind,
With grave and furrow'd wisdom shined;
Not cold; but glowing still and bright;
. . . . . .
Yet glowing with October light.
His cure his thoughts engrossed alone;
For them his painful course was run:
To bless, to save, his only care;
To chill the guilty soul with fear;
To point the pathway to the skies,
And teach and urge and aid to rise;
Where strait and difficult to keep,
It climbs and climbs o'er Virtue's steep."

THE PARSON AS A SCHOLAR

THE PARSON AS A SCHOLAR.

A STORY is told concerning Thomas Parker, of Newbury, which illustrates the condition of scholarship among the parsons. The theological opinions of this minister did not altogether approve themselves to his brethren. The brethren therefore visited him and engaged in argument. They spoke in English and he replied in Latin. They took up the argument in Latin and he answered it in Greek. They continued it in Greek and he fled to Hebrew. They followed him into Hebrew and he clinched the matter in Arabic. This was truly a clincher for them, since Arabic was beyond their acquirements. The incident gives a fair conception of the scholastic conditions which prevailed among the parsons.

Many of the clerical emigrants had ranked among the ripest students of the old country. When they settled in New England, they not only continued their labors in these congenial fields, but they speedily set to themselves the tasks of rearing an educated ministry and fostering the instincts of study among the people. No one will deny that they were the primary forces in this important movement. An examination into the history of our schools and colleges shows that the parsons furnished the vitality and the impulse for the founding and the conduct of many important institutions.

Cotton Mather was called the most learned man of his day, but Thomas Prince came close to him in the competition for scholarship. The ancient languages seem almost as familiar to these parsons as the vernacular in the home and on the street. John Cotton was called "a most universal scholar

and a living system of the liberal arts and a walking library." (I wonder if this description of Cotton suggested to Sydney Smith his *mot* on Macaulay—"a book in breeches"?) Peter Bulkly was an excellent scholar, and he showed his interest in education by giving his library (or a part of it) to Harvard. These men were always earnest in their efforts to foster learning and diffuse intelligence. Education was a part of their creed. Its encouragement was a religious obligation resting upon the ministry in an especial way.

The meeting together of ten Connecticut parsons and their small gifts toward an institution of higher learning in the colony was an incident typical of the purpose and method of these men. Not only did Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, and the swift-succeeding colleges owe their inception and organization largely to the ministers, but

they were also manned and managed by them. Not that we wish to detract from the creditable part which the laity took in the matter. The parson and his people were in harmony respecting the founding and support of the colleges. But it is a fact that the minister was given the leadership in the important business.

The governing body of the various institutions had a goodly proportion of parsons in it. They were esteemed especially fit to perform such tasks as must fall to them in this public capacity. When it came to the work of instruction ministers did large part of it. The teaching office was identified to a marked degree with the ministerial profession. A larger supply of well-educated preachers native to the soil being the chief object in mind, it necessarily followed that the parsons took the chief hand in the congenial labor of instruction.

The common schools likewise interested them. There were numerous parishes where the parson always served on the "school committee." The intimate relation existing between the town and the church would be sufficient reason for this thing, but an added explanation lies in the fact that the parsons were insistent upon the education of the people and sought every helpful means to encourage the multiplication and support of schools. When Horace Mann, in one of his reports to the Board of Education, urged the ministers to interest themselves in the schools, he simply recurred to the early habits and customs of the colony.

It was not an infrequent thing to employ the parson as a teacher. Whenever the community found it impracticable to secure a school-master, the people still had a last resort in the educated man of the parish.

Although such double duty was burdensome and harassing, yet the parson conformed uncomplainingly to circumstances and served according to the best of his ability. Many of the teachers came from the ranks of young divinity students. Jeremiah Day was an example. Samuel Williams taught school in his native place between the time of his graduation from college and his licensure to preach. These opportunities were coveted for the reason that they helped the impecunious students to the means necessary for the independent start in life.

Another form of service in behalf of education was performed by the parsons in their taking boys and youth into the family and preparing them for college. Many a minister eked out his income this way and filled the shelves of his library. The grammar schools established through New England were not so numerous as current opin-

ion suggests. For in various instances communities that had been instructed by public vote to establish and conduct these schools found it impossible to do so by reason of limited means. As a result the minister received ambitious pupils into his home and did for them the service that the town refused to do.

Moses Hallock, of Plainfield, Mass., and Dr. Wood, of Boscawen, N. H., fitted about one hundred men each for college. Two of the men instructed by Dr. Wood were Ezekiel and Daniel Webster. Other ministers wrought in this same way, one man preparing one hundred and thirty pupils for college. The record of Dr. Elizur Goodrich was even more remarkable, for he received nearly three hundred into his family; and by good management he lived in a generous way, educated his own five sons for public life, and left an estate of five

or six thousand dollars at his death. His library was one of the famous collections of New England.

This familiar and domestic form of instruction was especially favored in the pursuit of theological study. While the colleges had for their primary object the nurturing of an educated ministry, the training that was distinctively for the church was done by the individual parson. Dr. Bellamy had a long succession of college graduates in his home. These men sought theological training under his guidance. Aaron Burr was an inmate of his home for a season, and many were the arguments and discussions which these two famous men held during the weeks of their intercourse.

Professor Dwight, of Yale, bears a notable name and transmits to this generation many precious inheritances. A signal illustration himself of the debt which scholarship owes

to the parson class, we find in his famous grandfather, of the same name, a very worthy embodiment of the best and largest services rendered to the general prosperity of the country. The elder President Dwight had for a mother Mary, third daughter of Jonathan Edwards, a woman of rare spirit and intellect. The early years of his life were memorable by her faithful instructions and blessed influences. As scholar, poet, chaplain, farmer, and preacher, he made an enviable reputation.

His great work, however, was that wrought in the domain of the teacher. While pastor at Greenfield Hill he conducted a school which became famous in the land. Declining invitations to larger fields of labor, he remained in his country parish until elected president of Yale College. This gave him the opportunity to do the supreme task to

which he was appointed and for which he was fitted; and he achieved a work which identified him with the progress of New England as few men have been identified.

The indebtedness of education to the parson class is also seen in the many evidences of scholarship which appear in the history of learning here in New England. Dr. Edward Wigglesworth, teacher and preacher, was one of the original members of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. The various societies designed to foster study and research were adorned by the membership of many a learned parson. Linguistics, natural philosophy, history, there were ministers who gave themselves with zeal to the cultivation of these pursuits. Medicine itself was enriched by the services of many parsons. Doctor Jared Eliot was one of the most noted

cases, and his contributions to botany and other departments of science were significant.

Eliphalet Adams, of New London, was a marked scholar. When the rectorship of Yale was offered to him, a town meeting was called (April 16, 1714) and the matter being referred to his people, they voted that he decline the honor and remain with them. Doctor Timothy Cutler, of Yale, was one of the famed Oriental scholars of his day.

It is apparent that scholarship and the ministry are congenial. Did one attempt to state in detail the support which the parson gave to the cause of education the task would be almost endless. When an association for the improvement of schools was formed in Middlesex, William Woodbridge, a minister, was made president of it. This is a simple illustration of the confidence reposed in the

parson. It was believed that his interest in education was such that he would do all in his power for its best development. And he courted the responsibilities peculiar to the trust.

Now that teaching has become an important profession in itself, distinct from other intellectual services, the relations of the minister to its history are not emphasized. There is also a feeling common to many people to-day that education (in the technical sense) must be independent of the parson and the church. It is not for us to discuss the question in this connection, but it is for us to remember that the individual who served most efficiently as inspiration and leader in the matter of education here in New England during the early generations was the colonial parson; while the testimony of two prominent educators reminds us that the minister has proved an

invaluable factor in the diffusion of knowledge these later days.

Professor Stowe, who was connected for years with the educational system of Ohio, writes: "My experience has taught me to despair of establishing, with any permanency, even a good district school where there is not a good church and an intelligent ministry to watch over and sustain it." And Professor Sears, once secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, while referring to the help given him by various professional men, continued: "It may, however, be said, without any injustice to others, that the clergy of every name, in the Commonwealth, have been second to no other men in respect to an enlightened policy and energetic action in promoting the education of the people."

It is literally true that the typical parson of colonial New England was not only the

friend of education, but he was likewise an embodiment of scholarship.

> **"The calm delights**
> **Of unambitious piety he chose,**
> **And learning's solid dignity."**

THE
PARSON
AS A PREACHER

THE PARSON AS A PREACHER.

THE parson occupied a remarkable position when he proclaimed his message from the pulpit. The intellectual as well as the moral and spiritual life of the community was nourished by the preacher. Professor Fisher has observed that "the height of the pulpits from which they preached on the Lord's Day is a symbol of the elevation conceded to them by the general sentiment of the people." Any interruptions were considered disgraceful; and the people that had the temerity to disturb a meeting were visited with condign punishment.

One can scarcely imagine the excitement which must have prevailed during the witchcraft delusion, when the minister was interrupted by girls shouting, "Parson, your

sermon is too long!" (which was undeniably true, however), or "There is a great yellow bird sitting on the parson's hat in the pulpit." Such hysterical ebullitions were a feature of the troublous times. Occasionally some man would contradict the minister, but such events were rare. There was a law against this sort of thing in some of the colonies which read as follows: "If any one interrupt or oppose a preacher in season of worship, they shall be reproved by the magistrate, and on repetition shall pay £5 or stand two hours on a block four feet high with this inscription in capitals, 'A Wanton Gospeller.'" The criticism of ministers was a perilous business, words spoken against them being punishable with whipping, fines, and other ways.

The length of sermons was proverbial. Mather Byles used to preach his one hour; then taking the hour-glass in hand and turn-

ing it over, he would say, "Now we will take a second glass." (This witticism was probably borrowed from an English preacher). The second glass was something that the people took as a matter of course, and little objection was made to it.

While censure and contradiction were not permitted, people could not refrain from talking about the preacher and his preaching. Nathaniel Ward tells of a little child who observed that the minister moved about in the pulpit with a sort of Talmadgian manner (as we might describe it to-day). "Mother," exclaimed the child, "why don't the people let the man out of the box?" Mr. Ward applies the anecdote in writing to a young minister, by saying, "I entreat you to behave thyself in preaching, lest men say, 'This is a Jack-in-a-box.'"

People took note of voice and manner quite as seriously in early days as they do

in this age. Samuel Neal preached for his father-in-law, Samuel Willard. But the people did not like the preaching of the son-in-law, and Mr. Willard was requested not to invite him to preach again. A little later father-in-law Willard borrowed son-in-law Neal's sermon and preached it with excellent effect. The people were so delighted with it, that he was requested to prepare a copy for publication. His merry satisfaction may be easily imagined.

There was a great deal of drollery in the pulpit and out of it among these good men. John Cotton observed on one occasion that he wanted light upon a certain subject ere he delivered himself of it, so a friend sent him a pound of candles. Mr. George Phillips became so witty and jestful in his preaching that it was said he failed to maintain the dignity of his profession. Even John Eliot had quaint ways of putting things, so that the

souls of his hearers must have sometimes smiled even if their faces did not. His preaching was described as quite "plain so that the very lambs might wade into his discourse on those texts and themes wherein elephants might swim."

The mirthful Mr. Phillips was accustomed to read the Bible through, from Genesis to Revelation, six times every year. He was also conversant with the original languages, and he never needed or used a concordance.

In their preaching the early colonial parsons dwelt chiefly upon doctrines and wonders. This was the result of training and association. The later colonial parsons emphasized doctrines with the same amplitude and elaboration, but they became subtle metaphysicians. The mental acuteness of these men was well-nigh matchless. They were the peers of the best dialecticians in

Europe. Sermons were arguments, chains forged with the set purpose to hold in subjection the minds of men. The philosophical discrimination manifest in these productions confounds the man of to-day who goes to church that his weary brain may take a rest. And yet the effect produced by these preachers was often a marvel. Edwards usually read his sermons. We are told how he kept his eyes upon the manuscript; how he followed his line of discussion with quiet, intense manner; how he did not lift his voice to any high, dramatic intonation but simply interpreted his message with the calm assurance of unconquerable conviction; how the very serenity and decorum of his manner served to emphasize the importance of the truth, so that at the last the waves of emotion passed tumultuously back and forth over his congregation, and people were compelled to give vent unto their pent-up feel-

ings by means of groans, cries, shakings, distortions, and kindred exercises.

Dr. James W. Alexander calls to mind the incident of Edwards' taking the place of Whitfield, "the darling of the people," who failed to appear when a multitude were gathered to hear him. Edwards, unknown to most in person, with unfeigned reluctance, such as a vainer man might feel, rose before a disappointed assembly and proceeded with feeble manner to read from his manuscript. In a little time the audience was hushed; but this was not all. Before they were aware, they were attentive and soon enchained. As was then common, one and another in the outskirts would arise and stand; numbers arose and stood; they came forward, they pressed upon the centre; the whole assembly rose; and before he concluded sobs burst from the convulsed throng. "It was the power of fearful argument."

Whittier has set him before us in the greatness of his mind and heart:

"In the church in the wilderness Edwards wrought,
Shaping his creed at the forge of thought;
And with Thor's own hammer welded and bent
The iron links of his argument,
Which strove to grasp in its mighty span
The purpose of God and the fate of man.
Yet faithful still, in his daily round
To the weak and the poor and sin-sick found,
The schoolman's lore and the casuist's art
Drew warmth and life from his fervent heart."

Charles Chauncey, the great-grandson of Harvard's president of the same name, was opposed to Whitfield and his style of preaching. He used to say that he prayed God he might never be an orator. A wit remarked that his prayer had been answered. So that we see the same diversity of views and tastes prevailed generations ago that do these modern times.

The occasions which called forth sermons

were more numerous than to-day. At one period there was such a thing as wedding discourses. Parson Smith's daughter, Mary, married Mr. Cranch (ancestor of the artist). She had her father preach on the text, "Mary hath chosen the better part, which shall not be taken away from her." Her sister, Abby, married John Adams, who was not popular with Mr. Smith or his family. Mary suggested that her father preach a wedding sermon for Abby on the text, "John came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and ye say he hath a devil."

Every event suggested a discourse. The pulpit was the place where all that concerned the individual or the state must be discussed. We hear something said about the secularization of the sermon to-day. One needs simply to adventure into these broad, rich fields of pulpit literature during the colonial days and he will come back to the present

with a feeling that the times are not so changed as he has imagined. Many of these ancient discourses are simply world-wide in the largeness with which they embrace every topic of interest peculiar to the day. One sermon which I have read, preached in Hartford by Samuel Wakeman, contained some fifty-six divisions and subdivisions. And each separate portion of the discourse was treated with a fair degree of elaboration.

One of Cotton Mather's sermons was entitled "Brantologia Sacra." He divided it into seven thunderbolts, filled with sharp lightnings from the Scriptures. We are told that while preaching a tremendous storm burst above the congregation. As Mather exclaimed, "In the thunder there is the voice of the glorious God!" a messenger came and told him that his house had been struck. The quick-witted parson was swift to improve the incident and put into the

discourse a few additional thunderbolts. At the conclusion the people must have felt that between the storm within and without they had been severely handled.

On April 20, 1768, the young ladies of the parish of Newbury met at the house of Mr. Parsons, the parson. (We quote from an old record.) He preached to them on the text Prov. xxxi. 19: "She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff." The guests then proceeded to illustrate the text by "spinning two hundred and seventy skeins of good yarn." The narrative says: "They drank Liberty Tea." This was made from an herb called rib-wort. Doubtless the instructions and encouragements of the preacher were acceptable. The fruits of the spinning-bee were presented to the parson's wife.

This mild and charitable form of dissipation was quite popular. *The Connecticut*

Journal of April 12, 1775, contains the following news: "We are informed from the Parish of East Haven, that the last week the women of that parish . . . presented the Reverend Mr. Street . . . with upwards of 130 run of well-spun linen yarn. . . . And the generous guests, after some refreshment and taking a few dishes of coffee, agreeable to the plan of the Continental Congress, . . . dispersed with a cheerfulness that bespoke that they would be well pleased without a sip from that baneful and exotic herb (tea) which ought not so much as to be named among the friends of American Liberty." Which narrative shows that the spinning-bee was a nursery of patriotism at the same time that it yielded the practical fruits of domestic life.

Sermons did not always accompany these exercises. But at one time or another sermons touched every phase and condition of

activity. Mr. Williams stigmatized veils; Mr. Eliot frowned on wigs, long hair, and tobacco; Mr. Wilson disapproved of treaties; Mr. Colony discussed the governor's salary; Mr. Peters exploited the subject of a stock company in fishing. And whatever theme the preacher chose as the object of his illumination and eloquence, he left little doubt in the minds of his hearers in respect to his meaning. Tennyson's "Northern Farmer" explains:

"An' I hallus comed to's choorch afoor my Sally wur dead,
And 'eerd un a bummin' awaay loike a buzzard-clock ower my yead,
An' I niver knaw'd whot a mean'd but I thowt a 'ad summut to saay,
An' I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said an' I comed away."

The congregation of the colonial parson in New England did not take the message

in this blind way. Men "sensed" it. The appeal was made to their understanding. One expected to think about it and weigh it in his own private scales. Any deficiency which might be detected was sure to be reported to the parson and made the occasion for further discussion and explication.

"For the preacher's merit or demerit,
It were to be wished the flaws were fewer
In the earthen vessel holding treasure
Which lies as safe in a golden ewer;
But the main thing is, does it hold good measure?"

The Puritan congregations generally considered that they had good measure. "There is, perhaps, no greater hardship at present inflicted on mankind in civilized and free countries, than the necessity of listening to sermons," says the author of "Barchester Towers." Such a statement must be received with a great deal of allowance for the prejudices and peculiarities of Trollope.

But however much of truth there may be in it to-day, it is quite certain that our ancestors had another mind, and for generations were conspicuously appreciative of preaching.

THE PARSON AS A MAN

THE PARSON AS A MAN.

THE parson was by no means devoid of attractions as a man. He not only showed himself a competent person on various occasions, but a spirit of real manliness flamed in his life. The old saying that people are divided into men, women, and priests had little force in his case. He did not lord it over God's creation because he was chosen to the headship of the local church. His superiority was largely personal. It belonged to the man.

"Self is the man. Who crown and throne would claim
Must personally be worthy of the same."—FAUST.

We are therefore to think of him as a man among men. The caricatures which set forth the priest of the mother-country and

the misinterpretations which have been handed down through the centuries strike wide of the mark when it comes to a discriminating examination of facts.

The parson was a manly man. He came into daily touch with the men of the parish and the colony. His life was no ascetic or celibate life. The experience helpful to trade and agriculture was quite as likely to be found among the ministers as among the laymen. There was a masculinity about this individual that harmonized perfectly with his environment. Many of these men were like Nimrod, famous hunters before the Lord. They enjoyed that out-of-door activity which signifies healthy blood, exuberant spirit, sanguine disposition.

The pastor of the church in Ellington, Conn., climbed to the top and fell to the bottom of the meeting-house tower, a distance of seventy feet. But it did not interfere ma-

terially with his ministry. He was not to be laid one side by any such small incident. His fibre was such that an occasional strain of this kind was a mere passing event. These men were well constructed and wisely tempered so that they were able to with stand many a hard knock and make a tranquil way through many a wild tempest.

They were genial individuals. It is hard to find better company than a coterie of ministers to-day. They inherit this spirit of good-fellowship. The starch which these men had about them was scarce ever deeper than the spotless shirt-bosom. The dignity of manners was not a chosen barrier to keep aloof their fellow-men. On the contrary we must think of it as the fashion of the times, common to all gentlemen, the sign-manual of social standing and service. There were men that became absorbed in the higher pursuits of learning and

became known for their absent-mindedness. John Eliot was a mild, generous, simple gentleman and one that walked with this abstracted demeanor. His good wife one day jested with him about his cows. The animals passed before his door and she demurely asked him whose they were. He was obliged to confess that he knew them not. But the typical parson was not such an one that he lived above the care and turmoil of daily life. He touched society at every point and he moved among people with a certain largeness of experience and ease of adaptedness that are taken for the characteristics of the man of the world.

Life was intensely prosaic. Ministers were compelled to give a practical turn to things in general. The phrases used to describe them smacked of daily experience. The Puritans said that the ship which carried Cotton, Hooker, and Stone brought

"three great necessities, Cotton for their clothing, Hooker for their fishing, Stone for their building." A quotation from the elegy on John Higginson, of Salem, runs as follows:

> "For rich array cared not a fig,
> And wore Elisha's periwig."

This was one way of saying that Mr. Higginson possessed great good sense and was a thoroughly practical man.

There was nothing in the community that did not concern them. Increase Mather took a deep interest in the introduction of inoculation for small-pox in this country. And another minister, Benjamin Coleman, a poet as well as preacher, wrote a tract upon the subject in 1721 and did all in his power to mitigate this dread disease which made such havoc in the land.

The parson was also a man of courage. It was not only that he had the courage of

his convictions, but he had the courage of his actions. One night Mr. Hooker heard some peculiar sounds proceeding from his cellar. It might be a thievish bear or a wicked man. He quickly dressed and went quietly down into the subterranean regions.

The visitor was an unholy individual that lived near the parson, and he was taking away Mr. Hooker's last piece of pork. "Neighbor," said the parson, "you act unfairly. You ought to leave a part for me." The frightened thief fell upon his knees and begged Mr. Hooker's pardon, but Mr. Hooker divided the pork with him and sent him home a conscience-scourged and repentant man.

It was very sensible advice which this particular parson gave on the occasion when a young minister proposed to go into the parish where there dwelt an old, malicious preacher—for they did have occasional

black sheep in the days of old as well as the days of new. "It is dangerous and uncomfortable," remarked the wise parson, with commendable frankness and courage, "for little birds to build under the nests of old ravens and kites."

One gets the impression that these colonial parsons were plain-spoken in their dealings with the people. Mather Byles was a rank Tory. He made himself particularly offensive to the congregation of Hollis Street Church, Boston. Then the town itself took up the subject of his Toryism. In 1777 he was publicly denounced and arrested. Still he continued the free use of his tongue and budged not one inch from the position which he had originally assumed. Referring to the way that soldiers had been sent to restrain him and then dismissed from the interesting business, he observed that he "had been guarded, re-guarded, and disregarded."

But through the whole process he was fearless and jestful. When the British troops, the lobsters, passed his door, he exclaimed: "Ah, now our grievances will be red-dressed!" So we see that this eminent minister did notable service in his vocation, and retained, like his many predecessors and contemporaries, an intrepid spirit.

They were also courageous in the pulpit. They had a plain way of freeing the mind on all sorts of matters. Not alone grave concerns of state or education or spiritual life, but light and trivial things gave frequent occasion for speech in the meeting-house. The frank way in which Dr. Bellamy corrected his choir is an illustration. "You must try again, for it is impossible to preach after such singing," said this good man on one Lord's Day. What temerity and fearlessness does such an act show! Many a preacher has been metaphorically beheaded for a

smaller criticism and interference, although there comes to mind a later incident of this kind which shows that some of the preachers in this century inherited the same impulse to frank speech. For when Captain Brookes and some of his associates slipped out of the choir gallery during sermon time, they were greeted on the return with a most solemn rebuke on the part of their pastor, albeit the captain publicly explained that a neighbor's filly had gotten her legs over the thills and it was fly-time.

The circumstances were different but the manhood was the same, that we note in the case of Charles Chauncey. In 1747 he preached an election sermon before the governor and legislature of Massachusetts, that did not altogether please numerous hearers. It was upon the fluctuations of paper money, and he handled the subject in such a way that some of his audience became very in-

dignant and censorious. It was told him that the legislators would not publish the address as had been the customary way. "It shall be printed," said Mr. Chauncey, "whether the General Court prints it or not." Then by way of castigating his opponents the preacher observed, "If I wanted to initiate or instruct a person in all kinds of iniquity and double-dealing, I would send him to our General Court." A sentiment which shows that legislators were not always considered spotless and unblamable a century and a half ago.

One cannot follow the course pursued by these men without feeling the largeness of their humanity, the breadth of their sympathies, and the richness of their experience. They had their faults like other people. The sentiments and conditions of the times had much to do with their personal characteristics just as with the great majority of

the people. But there was a rare and generous manhood manifest through all the trying situations in which they were placed.

Mr. James Davenport was caught by the wave of emotionalism which passed over New England the middle of the last century. Under the spell of his strange enchantment people brought to him their wigs, cloaks, breeches, hoods, gowns, rings, necklaces, and other precious or beautiful articles, that he might destroy them by fire and thus save them from further temptations to worldliness. On March 6th, 1743, he gathered many people upon the wharf in New London. They brought with them such books as he had anathematized, books of travel, amusement, poetry; books that interpreted the worldly sentiments and experiences of men. A sort of funeral pyre was constructed. Then the valuable mass of literature was fired. Meanwhile the throng gathered about

the blazing books singing "Hallelujah!" and "Glory to God!" Now Mr. Davenport was "a very fair sort" of a man. The error of his way was made manifest to him at a later date. He therefore changed his course, came forth bravely into the public gaze to set the matter right, and sought by manly conduct to undo the harm which had been wrought by his strange vagaries.

There were many occasions on which these men made mistakes and fell into grievous errors. They never claimed infallibility. At the same time one observed a laudable and fruitful readiness to acknowledge faults and rectify mistakes.

The difficulties that beset the parson in his domestic affairs have been narrated with exhaustive particularity. But we are not to think of him as worse off than many of his parishioners. People lived according to their "means," and that signified a certain

narrowness that was not without its compensations. The poverty of the minister was often a fair example of the poverty that featured the day. The coin in which the minister received his pay was simply the "current coin of the realm," namely, common produce of one sort or another. When James Pierpont was called to New Haven it was voted to pay him annually, "while he shall preach the word of God to us, the sum of one hundred and twenty pounds in grain and flesh," and "to supply him with firewood annually."

Many of the parsons were quite "well-to-do." They had a fair proportion of this world's goods. By inheritance, by marriage, or by management they came into possession of goodly properties so that their estates appear to advantage on the records of the probate court. Joseph Webb had expensive clothes. The inventory of his estate

mentions a black broadcloth coat worth six pounds; vest and breeches, two pounds and a half; vest with silver buckles, three pounds and four shillings and sixpence, and other personal gear to match.

The inventory of the estate left by Charles Chauncey, of Strathfield, reveals the fact that he was a man of substance. His cloak was valued at four pounds, his black coat at three pounds, two nightcaps and two gowns at two pounds eleven shillings and sixpence, a looking-glass and silver-headed cane at three pounds and ten shillings. There are also silver spoons, cups, tankards, and gold rings. The inventory comes to nine hundred and sixty-five pounds.

Samuel Cooke, of Strathfield, seems to have worn better clothes and gathered a larger property than the majority of his ministerial brethren. His estate amounted to twenty-seven hundred and eighty-five pounds

sterling, with thirty pounds of tobacco added.

The pair of "lether" breeches with silver buttons must have been very substantial and elegant, for they were valued at nine pounds and ten shillings. Fine stockings were evidently a weakness with him, for several kinds are enumerated. His preaching Bible was set down at three pounds and fifteen shillings, his large Bible at four pounds, his Hebrew Bible at five pounds, his Concordance at six pounds.

Such records do not give one the impression that these parsons were poverty-stricken. When Washington on one of his trips through Connecticut stopped for supper at Milford, they gave him a broken pewter spoon with which to eat his bread and milk. So he handed the waiting-maid two shillings and bade her go

to the minister's house and borrow a silver spoon.

True it is that eccentricity sometimes manifested itself among the ministers. There was the parson who preached in his stocking-feet, and the one who preached in his study coat; the parson who ran a distillery and the one that covered his face with a black handkerchief; there was the lazy parson who made his people sing the longest psalm while he withdrew and rested under the trees on a summer's day; and the one who did not venture into his pulpit through some haunting impression that he would die in it, escaping this peril by preaching in front of the desk. But it would not be fair to say that eccentricity was an especial characteristic of the parson class. Queer people get into all vocations. The conspicuous station of the minister made his eccentricities more noteworthy and memorable.

". . . The elements
So mix'd in him, that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, This was a man."

Although the trials and besetments of his position were great, he still retained his allegiance to a noble ideal of character. His office was not allowed to belittle his manhood. Just as he was counted simply a brother workman in the local church, so was he kindred spirit in the social fabric of the land.

"A minister, but still a man."

THE
PARSON
AS AN ANCESTOR

THE PARSON AS AN ANCESTOR.

An atmosphere of romance pervaded the life of many a parson. The love experiences of these staid, decorous individuals were marked by the same fascinations that draw us to the story of every passionate lover.

The feeling prevailed through colonial society that the maiden was well married who married a minister. There were exceptions. The father of Priscilla Thomas, of Marshfield, did not wish his daughter to marry Noah Hobart, a poor theologue, preferring that she form an alliance with a man of property like John Watson, of Plymouth. But the majority of people were well disposed toward the parson when he came to court some daughter in the family. It was taken as an honor that he showed such inter-

est and discrimination. The parson being the chief individual in the parish, it was conceded that a sort of social leadership belonged by right to his wife. There were ladies, not a few, who were glad to submit to poverty as part of the price for a position in the parsonage.

Then it was a life with numerous sweet and peculiar compensations which was led by the parson's family. There was scarcely anything of private or public concern which occurred that the minister and his family did not share liberally in it. If there was one class of people through all these days of colonial life that kept unweariedly in the current of events it was the parson class. Who does not feel the attractions of such opportunity?

It is also true that many of the amenities of life centred in the minister's home. It seems to us that it was a bare and repug-

nant experience into which our forefathers plunged, but they never reckoned it in such terms. The few books; the household stuff that spake of refinement; the prevailing atmosphere of high thought and devout aspiration; the healthful activity of body, mind, and soul characteristic of the parson's home life; the manifold good influences which became synonymous with the parsonage household; these things all served to command the respect and win the friendly interest of the community. If there was one family more than another that belonged to everybody, that had its concerns thoroughly discussed by the general public, that was subjected to incessant and especial watch-care on the part of all classes and conditions of men, that particular family was sure to be the minister's.

While such oversight and interference might prove objectionable to some people,

it was not only taken as a matter of course by the parsons, but it soon came to be reckoned as partial compensation for his labors. People felt that they did him honor and put him under loving obligation when they proceeded to advise him in respect to domestic as well as parish matters. It is not every man that is worth such consideration that all his movements and experiences (the family being included) have vital interest for an entire community.

Last, and by no means least, in this enumeration of attractions we mention the parsons themselves. They were rugged, hearty individuals; thoroughly educated (according to the opportunities of the day); disciplined into a fair command of circumstances; possessed of the many virtues which made manhood genuine and esteemable; withal consecrated to the supreme tasks of a religious ministry, a thing which makes insistent

appeal to the finer and nobler instincts of womankind. And it were needless to say that these parsons averaged well with their brother men in respect to the gracious and beautiful impulses of the purest affection. The love history of these men, therefore, is one that glows with a singular charm.

What a sweet love story is the courtship of Jonathan Edwards! It was when Sarah Pierpont was only thirteen years old and Edwards twenty that he wrote his exquisite characterization of the rare maiden.

"They say there is a young lady in New Haven who is beloved of that great Being who made and rules the world, and that there are certain seasons in which this great Being, in some way or other invisible, comes to her and fills her mind with exceeding sweet delight, and that she hardly cares for anything except to meditate on Him; that

she expects after a while to be received up where He is, to be raised up out of the world and caught up in heaven, being assured that He loves her too well to let her remain at a distance from Him always. There she is to dwell with Him and to be ravished with His love and delight forever. Therefore, if you present all the world before her, with the riches of its treasures, she disregards and cares not for it, and is unmindful of any pain or affliction. She has a strange sweetness in her mind, and singular purity in her affections; is most just and conscientious in all her conduct; and you could not persuade her to do anything wrong or sinful, if you would give her all the world, lest she should offend this great Being. She is of a wonderful calmness, and universal benevolence of mind. She will sometimes go about from place to place singing sweetly, and seems to be always full of joy and pleasure, and no

one knows for what. She loves to be alone, walking in the fields and groves, and seems to have some one invisible always conversing with her."

What a lofty conception of character was this on the part of the lover! And when the proper time comes he wooes her with all the passionate devotion of the most ardent soul. Urging a speedy marriage, he writes her that "patience is commonly esteemed a virtue, but in this case I may almost regard it as a vice."

She was only seventeen when married; but it was one of the most notable and happy unions in colonial days. She filled the home with sunshine, she made an atmosphere of gladness, she quickened every heart that came within the circle of her gracious and noble influence. "A sweeter couple I have never seen," wrote Whitfield after a visit to them at Northampton. And

Whittier, in exquisite verse, dwells upon this sweet and blessed experience:

"Had he not seen in the solitudes
Of his deep and dark Northampton woods
A vision of love about him fall?
Not the blinding splendor which fell on Saul,
But the tenderer glory that rests on them
Who walk in the new Jerusalem,
Where never the sun nor moon are known,
But the Lord and His love are the light alone.
And watching the still, sweet countenance
Of the wife of his bosom rapt in trance,
Had he not treasured each broken word
Of the mystical wonder seen and heard;
And loved the beautiful dreamer more
That thus to the desert of earth she bore
Clusters of Eschol from Canaan's shore?"

The love-story of Nathaniel Appleton is more dramatic. He became infatuated with the daughter of Parson Gibbs, of Watertown. It is said that her attractions invited other suitors, so that young Appleton became distressed. One day he called and saw a rival's horse fastened nigh the gate. It took him

but a moment to set the animal loose and scourge it into a wild gallop off toward the woods. He then entered the house and informed the owner of the departed horse that he saw the animal running with all his might into the dim distance. Thus rid of the intruder, he proceeded to finish his business, and exact a promise of marriage from the object of his affections.

One is impressed with the fact that love's ways or impulses are much alike the world over, and that these young parsons, and often these old parsons, thoroughly appreciated the witchery of a lively, adventurous courtship.

We note an occasional exception. William Adams, son of Eliphalet (also a parson), preached for more than sixty years, but he never married or submitted to ordination, saying that he would not be bothered with a wife or a parish.

A good many of these favored men married into the parish. They were settled, and then came the time when they might wisely consider the choice of a helpmeet. The natural supposition would be that the young ladies who paid closest attention to the sermon and took most active part in parish work would win the heart and hand of the new minister. But love is a very curious and inexplicable spring of action. It was the unexpected that happened on many of these interesting occasions.

Many of the young students took a course in love as well as theology when they tarried in some minister's family preparatory to settlement. The parson's daughter was an especial favorite with the theologue in his matrimonial arrangements.

Three of Thomas Hooker's daughters married parsons. Edward Taylor, of Deerfield, married a minister's daughter, and he had

five daughters that became ministers' wives. These girls, reared in the minister's household, knew all the ins and outs of his life, so we infer that a parson's life had peculiar attractions for them, else they had given the mitten to their parson suitors.

The discipline characteristic of training in the parsonage was a thing of incalculable advantage to the young minister. It is a fact that many a parson began his work with far less practical knowledge of the difficulties in the way than that possessed by his parsonage-bred wife. She brought him a wealth of experience infinitely helpful. Had she not heard parish matters discussed, had she not heard these things talked over with all wearisome detail until she grew tired of the strain and grew wise in self-control? So she brought him as part of her dowry a certain accumulation of experiences. The young couple drew upon this treasured re-

serve and showed themselves on numerous occasions "wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

Moses Hemmenway, of Wells, whose pastorate extended through fifty-five years, married the daughter of his predecessor. They had five sons and six daughters. Jason Haven, of Dedham, married Catherine Dexter, daughter of the former minister. An examination of old records might lead the uninitiated to infer that there was something obligatory in this marrying of minister's widows or daughters, but in reality it was simply an illustration of free-will and foreordination most happily blended in the lives of its chief antagonists and apostles.

If the new minister could not marry the widow or the daughter of a parson, he was quite sure to take the lady that had not been elected to the position of parson's wife by the people. Happy the man who

brought his spouse with him when he moved into the parish and assumed his duties.

The parsons not only married into the "best families," but the "best families" belonged to the parsons. Not that they made much of this fact or said a great deal about it, but it came to be accepted as one of the conditions of life here in the New England colonies. The leading men other than parsons came to be the parson's father-in-law or son-in-law or brother-in-law, or his close blood kinsman. This occasioned the criticism in the mother country that New England was run by the parsons and their families, a fact which could not be refuted, which the majority of the colonists did not wish to evade or change.

Samuel Whiting, of Lynn, married the daughter of England's Chief-Justice in Cromwell's day. William Hooke, of New Haven, was cousin by marriage to Cromwell

and brother-in-law to Whalley the regicide. John Rogers, of Ipswich, took for a wife Elizabeth, the daughter of General Dennison.

Bearing these things in mind we see that he was a very important person when considered simply as an ancestor.

The early days were times when children flocked to the homes of the colonists something as doves flock to the towers of Venice. John Sherman, who came to Connecticut in 1634, was twice married, and he is said to have been the father of twenty-six children. Was not this a literal fulfilment of the Psalmist's words, "Lo, children are a heritage of the Lord. . . . Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them!"

One can but feel that the cup of joy must have continually overflowed for these respected ancients, since their families were almost uniformly large. Peter Bulkly had

fifteen children; Peter Hobart, eleven; President Chauncey, eight; Increase Mather, ten; Samuel Danforth, twelve; John Higginson, nine; Samuel Treat, thirteen; Edward Taylor, fourteen; Cotton Mather, fifteen. We might continue this enumeration, but it is enough to observe that while the usual variations occurred in these families they were almost uniformly families of large dimensions.

This was an important fact considered from the view-point of intellectuality. The parson's numerous offspring had the use of his books, the influence of his studious example, not less than an inherited bias toward the intellectual life, and resources that were wisely and consistently developed. We therefore feel assured that conditions favorable to a high type of manhood resulted.

It is one of the fanciful opinions current in society that the sons of ministers do not

turn out well. They average better than their competitors. Consider how many of these sons entered the ministry. Four sons of John Eliot studied theology, one of them dying ere he entered the pastorate. Two of Cotton's sons and two of Hooker's became parsons. Thomas Shepard reared three parsons; Peter Bulkly, four; Peter Hobart, four; Samuel Whiting, three; Richard Mather, four. These are a few worthy examples of a large and interesting number of cases. The sons followed the ministry with a faithfulness that evokes our praise and gratitude.

It is pleasant to note that the ministerial bent was manifest in these families to such extent that it resulted in what might be termed the parson caste. Fathers, sons, grandsons, with their ministerial associates formed a cultivated and influential class in the state. With all the difficulties that beset

the minister in his work, he managed to hold his own among the people and impress himself with energy upon the mind and heart of society. Any revolt against his leadership was generally individual. The colonists put their confidence in him and it was honored.

Not a few of our ministers to-day are inheritors of these precious life tendencies. Richard Salter Storrs, D.D., is the third minister in direct descent who bears the worthy name. The great-grandfather, a Connecticut product, was a pastor for many years and served as chaplain in the Revolution. The services rendered to church and state by the present possessor of the name emphasize the fact that Richard Salter Storrs embodies the best traditions and incarnates the vital spirit regnant in the life of the past.

It is a long and interesting chronicle. These parsons' sons took up the work of the

fathers and sustained it with credit and ability. There were generations after generations of Cottons, Stoddards, Mathers, Williamses, Cleavelands, Eliots, Higginsons, Emersons, Davenports, Rogerses, Chaunceys, Adamses, Stones, Smiths, and other families too numerous to mention, that continued to serve in the ministry and still continue their services, adding strength to the nation and the kingdom of God.

What a company of magnificent men have carried with them the great inheritances of Edwards and Dwight! The old New England parson keeps reappearing with his noblest instincts, his finest impulses, his largest endowments, his grandest achievements. It is told of Edwards that when he was dying he lifted his soul in prayer to God, consecrating his descendants to the Master's service, beseeching God to bless them unto the latest generations. May we not believe

that his prayer has been a precious factor in the notable services of the men and women inheriting his gifts?

But we are not to think that the blessings of such ancestry confine themselves to the ministry. The various departments of life show the enrichment of character and the transmission of power peculiar to the parson. The business interests of the nation are involved in these noble legacies.

It is Mr. Hackit in "Scenes from Clerical Life" that observes: "I never saw the like to parsons; they're al'ys for meddling with business, an' they know no more about it than my black filly." Mr. Bond expresses the prevailing opinion when he says that "they're too high learnt to have much common-sense." Nevertheless abundant proofs satisfy one that parsons average well in the management of affairs, that often they show special aptitude for business, and that com-

mon-sense is not an uncommon characteristic of the class. Sir Joshua Reynolds maintained that skill in any pursuit in life did not depend upon special faculties, but upon the aggregate amount of mental power. The colonial parson was often known as a famous manager, and he transmitted to many a son and daughter an inheritance of capacity for business that was noteworthy. It was not alone that his children and their descendants achieved great things in making a small income stretch to large proportions, but it was likewise the fact that the children took conspicuous places in the trade, commerce, and enterprise of the land.

William E. Dodge was one of the successful men of the past generation. Some fair measure of his success reverts to Parson Cleaveland. J. Pierpont Morgan is eminent among the financiers of the world to-day. His given name witnesses to his heirship of

intellectual force from the parson-poet, John Pierpont, and the parson-scholar, James Pierpont.

Professor Silliman, the famous scentific scholar, and Benjamin D. Silliman, the eminent and venerated lawyer, number several parsons among their ancestors. Jedidiah Mills and Dr. David Ely, pastors for nearly a century in Huntington, are among their progenitors. A. M. Fish, of Stonington, was another contributor to their line. Many a story of service, devotion, courage, scholarship, and power, modestly told by the biographers of these early parsons, repeats itself with precious embellishment and luminous commentary in the lives of these later men of mark.

The parson has continued his literary career not only in the person of his ministerial descendant but quite as notably in the person of the man of letters. The intellec-

tual activity manifest in the New England colonies was largely an expression of life in the parsonage. So the children took to making books.

The men that have made impressions upon the literary world in America have come in a majority of cases from New England; and these writers have been in the majority of cases heirs of the parson. Emerson is the cultured product of a long line of ministers. We render him our first homage, for he embodies much of the old-time, fresh, independent, forceful thinking. James Russell Lowell, poet, statesman, scholar, essayist, is another choice plucking of parson fruitage. His father was an honored minister of Boston, and his great-grandfather was the first minister of Newburyport. That fineness of taste and delicacy of sentiment characteristic of the poet may be counted as inheritances from these men. Aaron Bancroft, father of

the historian, George Bancroft, was for many years the pastor of a Congregational church in Worcester. The historian Hildreth is the son of a minister, although the line does not go back to the colonial period.

Francis Parkman writes with the vividness and insight of a man who has learned to master language and pierce down into the hidden sources of events. His father was a minister and his great-grandfather was the first pastor in Westborough, serving his parish sixty-five years, dying at the ripe age of eighty-six. John Lothrop Motley was named for a parson grandsire of colonial days; while Samuel Checkley, another ancestor, served as a preacher in early New England. Edmund Clarence Stedman carries with him into his prose and poesy the ancestral influences of Aaron Cleveland, an honored and useful poet-preacher of the last century. Thomas Wentworth Higginson is

the modern representative of that staunch parson, the first Francis Higginson, who served the church in Salem with conspicuous ability.

Edward Everett Hale, like the old parson of New England, takes active part in the manifold tasks of private and public life. The example to such service was set him by his colonial parson-ancestor, John Hale, of Beverly, a man who re-appears in eminent physicians, soldiers, journalists, scholars as well as ministers. A. Bronson Alcott reaches back through one line of ancestry to Nicholas Street, the father, and Samuel Street, the son. These worthy men fathered descendants that have taken very conspicuous part in various spheres of service. Art, education, business, the law, the ministry; they have all received notable contributions from the Street family. In connection with the inheritances of Alcott, we call to mind the

literary success of his daughter, Louisa M. Alcott, who is the sixth generation from Samuel Street, of Wallingford.

Fitz-Greene Halleck was once a name revered and honored among the poets. One of the first singers to sound in America a sweet, clear note of true poesy, he was peculiarly dear to the heart of the generation past. It was a Pilgrim and Puritan ancestry that prepared him for his life work. John Eliot, the "apostle to the Indians," was a contributor to his personality on the mother's side.

In his biography of Nathaniel P. Willis, Professor Beers writes that "probably the most noteworthy of the poet's forebears, at least upon the father's side, was the Rev. John Bailey," first minister over the church in Watertown and later the associate minister over the First Church of Boston. "What more can a man ask for in an ancestor?"

continues the biographer. "No New England pedigree which respects itself is without one or more fine old Puritan divines of this kind."

A noble stock of parson ancestors transmitted their gifts to Donald G. Mitchell. Alfred Mitchell, of Norwich; Stephen Mix, of Wethersfield; Solomon Stoddard, of Northampton; Gurdon Saltonstall, of Norwich; the Woodbridges, of New London, Groton, Wethersfield, and Andover; John Ward, of Andover; and Elder William Brewster, of the *Mayflower;* what a company of great souls! And they are worthily interpreted by this son who has wrought with faithful spirit in the field of letters.

These parsons did not possess the abundance of books that feature modern days in New England, but they had choice collections of standard works, and they mastered the few books that came into the parsonage.

But this literary impulse was especially nourished and encouraged by thorough familiarity with the Bible. The saying of Emerson, that we are to beware of the man of one book, brings to mind the culture manifest and the power evoked among these colonial parsons. The Bible was the one book with them, and it was a vast, precious, inspiring literature common to every inmate of the minister's home. Its history, stories, ethics, statesmanship, and poetry, not less than its theology, metaphysics, and religion fed the people, quickened lofty sentiment, filled the mind with beautiful imagery, fostered the spirit of intellectual and moral activity. The hidden sources of mental and spiritual life were continuously strengthened and enlarged through these generations of pioneer experience. A remarkable energy, fruitfulness, adaptability, and leadership in letters was the natural, happy result.

We have spoken of the parson as a statesman. A good deal of ministerial blood has flowed into numerous descendants who became statesmen. The part which the minister took in the control of political affairs, the office of referee to which he was continually chosen when the magistrates and legislators wanted advice or decision upon important matters, was a sort of training for the rising generation. The boys heard much of the current discussion. They manifested a growing interest in public concerns. A taste for political life was native. The opportunities came for preferment. It resulted that a goodly proportion of the men who conducted affairs of state came from the parson's family.

And then we are to consider that a certain bias and tendency to public life was inherited, so that when one profession did not suit the individual he naturally passed over

into another. John Hancock, president of the Continental Congress, had a parson for a father and for a grandfather, both of them named John. John Adams married a parson's daughter, so that John Quincy Adams, the second Adams President of the United States, had a fair measure of ministerial blood running through his veins.

Grover Cleveland, the twenty-second President of the United States, is not only the son of a minister, but Aaron Cleveland, of Connecticut, a minister belonging to the latter part of the eighteenth and the first part of the nineteenth century, was one of his ancestors, while Aaron Cleveland, of Massachusetts (who was born in 1715), was an earlier ancestor and a very conspicuous parson.

Mr. Depew is a lineal descendant of Charles Chauncey, of Stratfield, and Justus Mitchell who married the sister of Judge Roger M. Sherman. The shining qualities

of Aaron Burr are universally conceded. A man who swerved from the path of rectitude, he nevertheless revealed rare powers. The mental force of the senior Burr and the grandfather, Edwards, were strikingly manifest in his character. Samuel Treat, a Connecticut parson, gave to statesmanship his grandson, Robert Treat Paine. Colonel Humphreys, poet and soldier, close friend of Washington, representative of our country in Portugal and Spain, a statesman that served the nation with acceptance, was the son of Daniel Humphreys, a worthy Connecticut parson. Other examples are numerous.

The longevity of the parson is one of the noteworthy facts in his career. "With long life will I satisfy thee" was a promise well kept. No other class of men, so far as we know, bears favorable comparison in this respect with the colonial parson. It did seem

on many and many an occasion that he would never die. While his people were devotedly attached to him, his usefulness in the pulpit waned with the waxing years, so that the desire was often strong on the part of his people that a colleague be associated with him. This was done in a great many instances, and a beautiful custom it was to keep the minister unto the end and care for him with loyal affection until the day of his final departure.

The banner pastorate of New England is credited to Laban Ainsworth, of Jaffrey, New Hampshire, who was wedded to his church for a period of seventy years. It is said that on one occasion when his salary was raised, he hastened to decline the mark of favor and good-will, observing that it was all he could do to collect his present salary, and if they increased it the consequence would be such increased labor of collection

that it would in all probability completely undo him. He was in the nineties when he died.

There are several centenarian ministers among the colonial pastors. Nathan Birdseye, of West Haven and Oronoque, is one of the most interesting. He attained the ripe age of one hundred and three years, five months, and nine days. When he died the whole number of his descendants was two hundred and fifty-eight, two hundred and six being alive at the time. His wife was the daughter of Thomas Hawley, colonial parson in Ridgefield. They journeyed together for sixty-nine years. Illustrious names are among the number of their descendants.

Nathaniel Appleton, of Cambridge, died in his ninety-first year, after a pastorate of sixty-seven years; Israel Loring, of Sudbury, lived ninety years, serving his church during

sixty-six of them; Benjamin Lord, of Norwich, was ninety when he rested from his labors. Eliab Stone, of Reading, died during the eighty-sixth year of his life and the sixty-second of his ministry. Benjamin Trumbull, the historian and patriot, was sixty years a preacher and attained the age of eighty-five. Noah Williston, of West Haven, was in his seventy-eighth year when he fell asleep, and his son Payson, of Easthampton, was close on to ninety-three when the end came. Dr. Ripley, of Greens Farms, drew nigh to four-score and ten. Isaac Lewis, D.D., of Greenwich, deceased at ninety-four. Samuel J. Mills, of Torringford, died in his ninetieth year. Samuel Hopkins was a preacher for sixty-one years; Joseph Dana, D.D., of Ipswich, sixty-four years. The pastorate of Nathaniel Emmons extended through sixty-seven years, and he passed on to the great majority when ninety-

five. Thomas Higginson was seventy-two years in the ministry. It was Nicolas Noyes who wrote of him:

> "Young to the pulpit he did get,
> And seventy-two years in 't did sweat."

In 1842 it was found that one hundred and eighty-nine graduates of Harvard had attained or passed beyond the age of eighty-four. The most of these graduates were ministers. Seventeen parsons of this company were ninety years old and upward. Such statistics might be extended; but enough has been written to show that the parson stands at the head of the class when it comes to a question of longevity.

It is evident that the connection is intimate between the kind of a life that he lived and the length of years with which he was honored. Piety is conducive to health, enjoyment, and age. But we must not put it to the account of piety alone, for some of the

best and most-consecrated parsons were short-lived. Brainerd, Edwards, Burr, Pierpont, and numerous devout and zealous ministers were cut off in the midst of their days.

A factor that had much to do with these long stretches of years was the varied character of the parson's activities. We must not forget that he farmed it; he was often a brisk man of business; and social relaxation absorbed a part of his time. We look with a sort of humorous indulgence upon the way that the parsonage family went out to tea and mingled continuously with the people of the parish. But this was not only a mode of work; it was a source of recreation. The parson unbent on these occasions. When it was necessary he went into the field and helped about the mowing and the reaping. He could turn his hand to the plough, the blacksmith's anvil, the carpenter's tools. He

[illegible] to teach school, assist the town

clerk in his business, run a mill, disentangle the finances of a country store, or assist at any of the common pursuits incident to pioneer life. Fishing and hunting were forms of out-door exercise which everybody enjoyed as a matter of course. As a result these good men must necessarily live out their days. There were churches not a few that took it to heart—the fact that the minister did live so long, for it embarrassed them. They scarce knew what to do with him when he calmly drifted on toward the nineties.

That is a pathetic scene which Mr. Aldrich describes in "Prudence Palfrey," when Parson Hawkins is asked to resign after his fifty years' service. "We tried to let him down easy," said Deacon Twembly, "but, Lord bless you, you never see an old gentleman so unwillin', and so hard to be let down." The poor old minister went into his study and there locked himself away from the

world. As the hours sped he still continued in his retirement. Finally they broke open the door. "Dead, they found him sitting, the Bible open on his knees, and his finger seemed to be pointing to the text (some read it as they peeped over the slanted shoulder); 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.'" And yet these old parsons were beloved by their people and often were they tenderly supported.

It is not to be inferred that they outlived their usefulness when age crept upon them and they were unable to serve their parishes with old-time vigor. They tarried among the people, scattering blessings on every side. Their wonted cheerfulness was like a benediction in the community. Advice was all the more precious that it had been tested through many years of loving service. Re-

identified to a large extent among

the young with the beloved and estimable man who had baptized, married, and buried a greater or less proportion of the whole parish. So the good man lived—

> "In his allotted home, a genuine priest,
> The shepherd of his flock; or as a king
> Is styled, when most affectionately praised,
> The father of his people."

THE COMPOSITE PARSON
OF
COLONIAL NEW ENGLAND



THE COMPOSITE PARSON OF COLONIAL NEW ENGLAND.

THE art of photography has attained such development that it is possible to compact the many features of a great company into the one form of a typical head.

Let us take the various parsons that have contributed their portraits to this our gallery of swift, rough etchings, and attempt a composite picture of the colonial parson in New England. While it is true that individuals are stamped with the dominant qualities which difference them from their neighbors, it is equally true that they possess features in common that give a sort of homogeneity to their class. Certain abounding characteristics exist which make instant and insistent appeal to the onlooker.

This particular colonial parson embodies the practical and the spiritual. He must needs be a practical man, for he is plunged into such circumstances and is forced to battle with such conditions that the Jack-at-all-trades side of human nature keeps coming to the surface. Such a generalization does not evade the fact that impracticable men like John Eliot are numbered with the parsons. We are not to be intimidated by such generosity as he manifested when carrying his salary in a knotted handkerchief, and trying to untie it in order to help a poor, sick woman, he finally gave it all to her, saying, "I believe the Lord designs it all for you."

Unpractical men are not peculiar to any profession or sphere of activity. They are found on all sides. The ministry must have its proportion. But it is certain that the colonial parson, in his typical presentment, was eminently practical. He was able to ad-

just himself to circumstances with a grace and shrewdness worthy the closest imitation. Quoting a phrase from Crockett, the parson was one who had "a good judgment on the secularities." To be sure, when such a statement is made we do not forget the help which came to him through his tactful and devoted wife. Much of the credit given to the minister belongs to the helpmeet. But as man and wife are one, the glory of partnership is not diminished when the name of the husband alone is used, and liberty is given to infer that the wise companion was the dominant factor in management.

That the person was a spiritual man would be taken for granted by many people, but reports have been circulated to the effect that his spirituality was a decadent thing. Taking into account the fact that he battled with circumstances such that spiritual life was necessarily hampered; taking also into

account the fact that he was cumbered with many cares both public and private, political and religious, we are surprised how large a proportion of time and how great a strength of life was given to things spiritual. There were periods when piety appeared at a discount. Social reactions set in and gave tone to church and state. This is simply history repeating itself.

When Whitfield appeared, grave charges were made against the parsons and strange scenes were enacted in the colonies. But a dispassionate examination of the subject shows that men good and true stood firm for honest and worthy convictions. The work of the ministry was continued in the established churches with fidelity and consecration. Final results show that much of the criticism offered upon the parson during this period was mistaken and cruel. While the contention between the "New Lights" and

"Old Lights" often savored of injustice, misinterpretation, and bigotry, yet the pure light of the divine life was perpetually manifesting itself in the hearts of men irrespective of party. The parson passed through the scourge of criticism and anathema on the one side and the other to his purification and enlargement. He was a spiritual man, living in close fellowship with his Master, the channel of great, vital impulses flowing into the hearts of earnest men.

This composite colonial parson also sets forth in vigorous form the physical and the intellectual nature. It has been said by others than Mr. Beecher that when parents had a sickly boy here in New England, one not suited to hard work or lively enterprise, he was put into the ministry. Now such a statement may be made as a sort of pleasantry, and it is often true that the thoughtful, studious child seems possessed of a frail

constitution, but when it comes to an accurate statement of the case, it must be said that the New England parson was a man of sturdy frame, impressive figure, commanding mien, abounding health, and magnificent vitality. Men like Dr. Hopkins and Dr. Emmons, tall, large, and robust, were common individuals among the parsons.

Things conduced to an athletic form of ministerial life. It was pioneer experience that featured the colonies. The parsons were just as much a part of such discipline as any other member of the fraternity. The New England parson did not ride to the hunt like his brother, the English clergyman of Virginia, but he went up and down his parish on horseback or afoot, he split more or less of the immense quantities of firewood which he burned, he planted apple-trees and gathered the fruit, he took care of the garden and managed his farm, he engaged in all

sorts of manly exercises peculiar to the life about him. He retired to rest at an early hour, for it was too cold in winter for him to read and study at night with any comfort. When summer came he was compelled to share out-of-door labors to such extent that he likewise sought an early bed. Then his fare was simple, hearty, and healthful. Eggs, milk, fruit, vegetables, fish, poultry, corn, rye, and other common, nourishing foods, these gave him bone, sinew, muscle, and blood in abundance. As a result these old parsons were a remarkably vigorous class of men. They endured all sorts of strain and pressure. They could study twelve consecutive hours when the opportunity came, for the reason that a good many other hours had been spent in the open air walking, fishing, planting, riding, harvesting, or attending to similar activities. There was nothing weak, frail, sickly, effeminate, or enervated about

the average parson of colonial days. When occasion presented he was perfectly competent to go into the field, as did Mr. Humphrey, and cradle not only the ripe grain but the soul of the sinful laborer so that both were successfully harvested.

The intellectual life is that phase of his character which has probably made the deepest impression upon men. The seed-corn of university graduates originally planted in New England was bound to multiply. Conditions were really favorable to such increase and expansion; soil and climate happily combined with native bent and prevalent ideal. So the parson became pre-eminently an intellectual minister. Any other kind of a man failed to meet the common demands of life.

The pulpit speedily took the lead in all mental activity. Newspapers were unknown or few and meagre. Books being

rare possessions and housed generally by the minister, he was natually the man to bring books into the service of his people. This was not done so much by their circulation as it was by his re-statement of their contents from the pulpit. It came nigh to being an intellectual imperialism. The people were taught to think. Habits of close, logical reasoning prevailed. But it was the parson that lived among books and directed the general current of thought.

There is something of charm and glory about this condition of things, for these parsons did not use their privileges with any selfish and narrow intent. They were for the times broad-minded, and they sought not personal but general interests. The thinking that has been characteristic of life in New England during the later generations traces its original impulse to the generous and fruitful thought-life which marked the

colonial parson. It was foreordained that this servant of the people should become a prime source of intellectual power.

We therefore observe that he conducted himself with singular discretion and success in the various spheres of influence and service. Strong in body and mind, compelled to be practical and disciplined into spirituality, the colonial parson was an excellent example of an all-around man. As a farmer he did well enough to eke out his living with the products of his glebe land. When cities grew and large towns sought him, there was less opportunity for the parson to share this delightful pastime. But if he did not raise his own potatoes and apples, the salary was often paid in these necessary commodities, and as it often occurred that large quantities of such produce came to him by way of payment, he was by sheer necessity made a trader.

This experience trained his commercial faculties. Undoubtedly that disposition for good bargains characteristic of many a parson's descendants traces its explanation to this early fact. The ministers of later years may not be famous for their business capacity (although we believe that they average well in this respect with men in general), but it is certain that the colonial parson was one quite capable of watching his own interests. It is true that he occasionally submitted to imposition, but he was wise enough to take the course which brought him, as a rule, ultimate credit.

As a scholar he was an honor to any land. His labors were tireless in behalf of education. While the means of study were quite limited, he still devoted himself with noteworthy zeal to the mastery of such intellectual tasks as came within his sphere. There resulted an acumen, an insight, a subtlety,

and a vigor which command universal admiration. While his original contributions to scholarship may have been meagre, yet the inspiration of his example and the interest excited by his enthusiasm served the most important purposes by way of shaping the life of New England. The parson was the acknowledged scholar and educator of the land. He was faithful to the opportunities which came to him, and fostered a love of study in the home and community at the same time that he did all in his power to enrich the common fund of knowledge and intelligence.

When it comes to statesmanship, this parson must receive our common homage. His services were great in what he directly and indirectly wrought or suggested. Arrogating to himself no arbitrary powers, seeking with single-heartedness the good of his people, he became on many great occasions the

dominant political force. Questions of state-craft were as familiar to him as questions of church order. He was often the most important factor in public events. It was a condition of things which he did not seek. Circumstances shaped life into such form, but through all the varied changes he retained his integrity of spirit, never seeking to take advantage of his position, always pressing with disinterested purpose toward such issues as he deemed wisest and best. He was a statesman. His political services do him honor. The names of many parsons are linked forever with those great state movements which to-day command our gratitude and reverence.

The books of these first generations have the parson's name on the title-page in the majority of cases. He constituted the literary class of his times. A few other writers did some work in the limited department of

letters, but the number is small. While the results of literary handicraft during the period before the Revolution are trivial and scarce worth mention, yet they have an historical value, and they make the humble, important beginnings from which proceed the fine, precious workmanship of the succeeding ages. The parson's love of books and devotion to the intellectual life signified the noble company of poets, historians, and literary artists that are to-day New England's pride and glory.

When one of these book-loving ministers in Massachusetts died leaving a young son and an excellect library, a Connecticut pastor (in Stratford) offered to give the orphan a home and contribute to his education in exchange for the use of his library. The arrangement was consummated and proved satisfactory.

This incident is matched by another of

different character. A deceased parson left a valuable library to his widow. An ambitious minister desired to purchase the books. When it came to the question of price, the widow informed the student that he might have the library on condition that he took her with it. The price being set and some time passed in an agreeable and varied consideration of the same, the young man came into possession of the two prizes and thereafter lived in great enjoyment of his bargain.

With this love of books there companied the impulse to make books. The reading and the writing of books on the part of the parson quickened an impulse which communicated itself to society about him.

The parson was pre-eminently a preacher. His pulpit was the channel through which flowed the strength of his heart and mind. Contrast the custom of New England with the customs of other colonies or peoples dur-

ing this formative period, and one is immediately impressed with the uniqueness of this section in regard to the influence of the pulpit over life. The people being characterized with peculiar strength of intellect, it was inevitable that their preachers would manifest a corresponding energy and power. Anything less than such mental leadership and aggressiveness must of necessity have been short-lived and have proved an ignominious failure.

The parson was a thinker, a logician, a scholar, a writer that destiny placed in the pulpit. He did not have a class-room in which to instruct. The newspaper did not afford him an outlet for ideas. The lyceum had not yet been devised. The opportunities for conversation were restricted. So he gave the strength of his mind unto pulpit work. He fed the people with strong meat. They received it in large quantities. The

week was required for its proper digestion.

Graces of oratory were not especially emphasized. It was solid matter of thought that commended itself to the congregation. A young man preaching before Dr. Emmons observed later to him, "I hope I did not weary you by the length of my sermon;" and Doctor Emmons replied, "No, nor by its depth either;" a reply which points to the characteristic demand of the early days. Neither length nor depth wearied people. Their preachers were trained so that they generally showed themselves satisfactory in both respects. On the organization of the church at Woburn the minister is said to "have continued in prayer and preaching about four or five hours."

The colonial parson was also the gentleman of his parish. He came of a good family. He took first stand as a college gradu-

ate. He was also conversant with the amenities of life and ranked well with the men that constituted the superior class in the colony. It is true that many incidents are told which put the parson in the light of an ill-bred man, but such cases are isolated so that they do not break the force of our statement.

The comparison between the parson of New England and the parson of some other lands during the period results favorably to the type which prevailed on these shores. It is not that our parson made much of dress, although he was generally the well-dressed man of the community; it is not that he cultivated exclusiveness or felt that he was better clay than many of his neighbors. But innate spirit, social opportunities, acknowledged station, familiarity with books, manners, travellers, the conditions of life peculiar to his profession at the time in New

England, these things contributed to his character of gentleman.

When it came to an occasion of social intercourse, the parson was present, not so much because he was a minister, as by reason of the fact that he was an interesting, well-informed, agreeable gentleman. The clerical character did not obtrude itself upon the public, but on the other hand the intelligent and companionable man was made conspicuous, and considered indispensable. While he did not think to become any Sir Charles Grandison, yet he was the popular model of gentlemanliness; the proprieties and the courtesies of life were put into his keeping; he bore himself with a grave and dignified politeness, a kind and faithful thoughtfulness of others, a gracious and commanding mien which signified the very spirit and beauty of royal Christian man-

The colonial parson was undeniably the "wit" of the period, and his "*mots*" have been handed down to the generations and rejuvenated on all occasions. Even John Randolph dared quote from him in the House of Representatives, for it was Dr. Joseph Lathrop who, when asked by a parishioner if he had any religion, replied, "None to speak of."

It would be difficult to discover men with brighter intellects than some of the Mathers or Doctor Byles or George Phillips. Had it been a day for after-dinner speeches, these men and many of their brethren would have gone down to fame, and been remembered by innumerable off-hand addresses scintillant with wit and humor.

But this adaptability was manifest in every hour of need. Many of the parishes were compelled to pass years without the help of a practising physician. The parson was

equal to the emergency. What more natural than that the people should turn to him in case physic was needed? So he ministered to their bodies as well as their souls. Elijah Wheeler, of Great Barrington, both preached and practised among his people. Lyman Hall served in the pulpit for a brief season, then he took to medicine. Jared Eliot, of Guilford, grandson of John Eliot, was "for many years the conspicuous minister of the town of Guilford, whose great abilities as a divine, a politician, and a physician were justly admired, not only among his own people, but throughout the whole colony." One authority says: "He was undoubtedly the first physician in his day in Connecticut and was the last clerical physician of eminence, probably in New England." Two sons became physicians.

It was not only a fashion with many parsons to have more or less to do with medicine

themselves, but they had a way of raising sons to serve as doctors of medicine. Occasionally a minister gave up preaching and devoted all his time to the ills of the flesh. John Bulkly pursued this course, and the same might be said at a later period in respect to the ministry and the law.

During the early period of New England history the legal profession was disapproved. When people had quarrels to settle they went to the minister, or the minister came to them, as did John Hancock, of Lexington. "Now, Reuben and Joseph, your line runs there and there let it run forever. That is your land, Joseph, and that is your land, Reuben; and let us have no more quarrelling about this matter." So Parson Hancock settled a misunderstanding between two of his parishioners. But lawyers finally were suffered to dwell in the colonies, and it was observed that the parsons shared in

the conduct of legal business, combining it with the ministry or demitting the ministry and giving themselves wholly to the law, or training sons into the unpopular profession.

When President Stiles renounced the law and became a preacher, it was observed that few men imitate such an example, although there were two other lawyers in Connecticut who pursued that very course the same year that Dr. Stiles did. The change was generally from the ministry into the law. When Mr. Wales was asked why he changed to the law, he replied by a quotation from Virgil:

"Facilis descendere Averni,
Sed revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras.
Hoc opus, hic labor est."

As the colonial parson of New England looks into our eyes do we not feel the touch of his great personality?

"Wide was his parish, and houses far asunder;
But he ne lafte not for rain ne thunder,
In sickness nor in mischief to visit
The farthest in his parish, much and lite,
Upon his feet and in his hand a staff.
This noble ensample to his sheep he yaf,
That first he wrought and afterward he taught;
Out of the Gospel he the wordes caught,
And this figure he added eke thereto
That if gold ruste, what shall iron do?"

How manifold are the offices this parson fills, the tasks he performs, the influences he exerts, the blessings he commands! When one reads concerning the many-sided ministry of these honored men; their dutifulness in church and state, in public and private, in health and sickness, in prosperity and adversity; when one measures the richness and nobility of their manhood, the shrewd adjustment of powers to circumstances, the pervading authority of consecrated and self-denying worth—it is then that one asks justice and appreciation for them. The parson was

a true, brave, great, wise, loving, and beloved man. The gentler light of his modest and loyal home-life reveals him as the pure spirit instinct with high and noble sentiments. The scholasticism, the austerity, the stateliness, the reserve which have come to dominate our conceptions of him retire into the background where they belong; while the sweeter traits of character and the brighter phases of experience appear in growing strength and reclaimed beauty.

We will therefore think upon the colonial parson with infinite tenderness and gratitude. We will rejoice in his service for liberty, righteousness, manhood. We will treasure with all loyalty of affectionate remembrance his splendid contributions to the material, intellectual, social, and moral advancement of this nation. We will give him a lofty niche in the temple of fame, and render him the homage that is due such

unique and masterful service in behalf of humanity.

"No power can die that ever wrought for Truth;
Thereby a law of Nature it became,
And lives unwithered in its sinewy youth,
When he who called it forth is but a name."

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